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THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

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INTRODUCTION

TWENTY-FIVE centuries ago on a full-moon day of the month of Asādha, in the deer park Isipatana, now Sarnath near Benares, there was enacted a memorable scene. For there the Lord Buddha, after attaining Enlightenment, preached His first sermon, the Discourse of the Setting in Motion the Wheel of Righteousness. In that sermon the Lord pointed out the Way, and established on a broad imperishable basis, His Kingdom of the Law.

The teaching of the Lord Buddha stands unique in the world, because He alone of the Great Teachers laid supreme emphasis on the capability of each man to work out his own salvation, independent of Gods and priests and rituals. For man's sorrow is of man's making alone; the cause of it is the craving for sensation, the desire for separateness and for identification with "the will to live"; the remedy is to put an end to that thirst, and the method is the Noble Eightfold Path. This Eightfold Path has stood the test of time;

century after century men have trodden it, and testified that in the treading they have found peace.

The power in the Lord Buddha's message lies in the fact that He taught men to still their outward and inner natures by a life of charity and compassion; for when the storm within has subsided because a man no longer breaks the Five Promises, then the Way is clear before him. From within a man's own heart will shine the light he needs to illumine his way, for within him is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." What the Lord did was to mark out step by step the road to discover this light within. As He had discovered it Himself through many a life of striving, so He pointed it out to those He came to save. But He could save none who would not themselves "work out their own salvation with diligence." He could but point out the Way, and no more. But to this He testified with His life—that what He found all could find who would tread the Way.

That is why we Buddhists reverence the Lord, and say, "I take my Refuge in Buddha." For He gave us the greatest gift He had to give, "the gift of the Law," that eternal, immutable Law in nature which moves the sun and the stars as the Law of Evolution, and moves too in the hearts of men as the Law of Love. In many ways this Law reveals itself in the world of men; it is the Wisdom of the East and the Science of the West; it is the Harmony of the Artist and the Polity of the Statesman who loves his fellow-men; but to us Buddhists it is above all things the Noble Eightfold Path,

> "... which brings to peace;
> By lower or by upper heights it goes;
> The firm soul hastes, the feeble tarries. All
> Will reach the sunlit snows."

All will reach the sunlit snows—so rings out triumphantly the Voice of the Lord. Blest we, if listening to that Voice we understand.

C. JINARĀJADĀSA

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that are the laws of Evolution and cooperating in the labour of [illegible]. In [illegible] in the world [illegible] it is the Wisdom of the [illegible] and the [illegible] of the World [illegible] of the [illegible] and the [illegible] of the [illegible] who [illegible] to the [illegible] is where all [illegible] the Noble Eightfold Path,

. . . which belongs to poetry
By leaves or by upper heights of poesy
[illegible]
[illegible] arrows.

He will [illegible] the [illegible] the Voice of the Lord. [illegible] to that Voice are [illegible].

C. JINARAJADASA

CONTENTS

PAGE

Introduction . . . v
I. Right Understanding . . . 1
II. Right Mindedness . . . 21
III. Right Speech . . . 39
IV. Right Action . . . 65
V. Right Livelihood . . . 82
VI. Right Endeavour . . . 105
VII. Right Recollectedness . . . 145
VIII. Right Concentration . . . 169

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CHAPTER I

RIGHT UNDERSTANDING

IT has long been the custom to place on the opening page of books treating of the Dhamma of the Buddha, the ancient Pāli formula expressive of homage to the holy, the exalted, the supremely awakened One. The old time-honoured practice is eminently commendable, for who is there worthier the world's homage than He through whom has come to the mankind of this *kappa*, this era, the knowledge of Nibbāna and way thither?

But if it be well thus constantly to signify a grateful recognition of the Bringer of the knowledge, surely it were no less well if with equal frequency mention were made of that wherein the knowledge consists, so that Teacher and Teaching might always be associated the one with the other, and no opportunity given for mistake or misapprehension as to the meaning and function of either. Surely it were well if every leaflet, pamphlet, treatise or book dealing with the Dhamma of the Buddha, also bore on its first page in the boldest, most striking characters procurable, that saying in which the Buddha himself sums up the entire purport of his Teaching: "One thing only do I teach—Ill and the Ending of Ill."

"One thing only do I *teach*," He says. He does not say, "One thing only do I *know*." Quite the contrary: for upon occasion as He was passing through a forest attended by a company of His disciples, He picked up a handful of leaves from the ground and, holding them out, asked His followers then with Him which in their opinion was the greater—the bunch of leaves in His hand or all the remaining leaves in the wide forest. The *bhikkhus*, of course, replied that the remaining leaves in the forest were greater in number by far than those their Master held in His hand. "Even so," was His impressive reply, "is that which I have not told you greater far than that which I have told you. But what I have told you is sufficient unto Deliverance—this namely: Ill, its Arising, its Ceasing, and the Way that leads to its Ceasing." Clearly then, in any discussion of the Buddha's Teaching whether by friend or foe, what must always be borne in mind is that which the Teacher actually taught, to the exclusion of anything else that He might and could have taught; and what He taught was just the existence of a disease and its cure, the presence of an evil and the method whereby that evil might be removed—nothing more.

The first of the eight divisions of the Path that leads to the Ceasing of Ill is called Right Seeing or Understanding, and in consonance with what has just been said as regards the essential nature of the Buddha's teaching, this seeing or understanding is not any one of the thousand things the restlessly busy, actively curious and contriving minds of men are only too apt to conceive it. To see and understand rightly in the Buddha's sense of the words, does not for instance mean to see and understand that the world is eternal; no more does it mean to see and understand that the world is not eternal. The world may be eternal, and again it may not be eternal; however the case may be, it has no bearing on the only thing with which the Buddha is concerned—Ill and its Ending. Neither in the Buddha's acceptation of the words, does seeing and understanding rightly, mean seeing and understanding that the universe is finite, any more than it means seeing and understanding that it is infinite. The universe may be either the one or the other without in any way affecting the Buddha's sole business—the relief, final and complete, of suffering.

Put in its most succinct, its briefest possible form, Right Understanding may be defined as the simple understanding that everything that has arisen, without any exception, has done so in dependence upon some immediately pre-existing condition, and that with the abrogation, the removal of this condition, the thing arising in dependence upon it is also abrograted, removed, ceases to be. Or, as the Buddha Himself puts it, yet more briefly and succinctly: it is to see "that being, this is; that arising, this arises. That not being, this is not; that ceasing, this ceases."

This, of course, is only a particularly terse way of formulating the law of causation upon which the methods of modern physical science are based, for that science does not seek for causes in any real sense of the term, but only, strictly speaking, strives to ascertain the antecedent conditions under which any given phenomenon arises. The Buddha, however, is something more than a physical scientist; and albeit His formula holds good of physical phenomena, of the sequence of change observable in physical matter, on His lips it embraces a wider and somewhat different purview. Concerned as He is only with Ill and its Ending, His definition of the law of causation is set forth only with reference to Ill. This Ill is ill as felt and known by each man immediately in his own person. Hence the understanding of Ill and its Ceasing and the application of the law of causation thereto, means the application of the law of causation to man and his various psychical states, to all human states of feeling and emotion and mentality. In other words, it means the understanding that such and such an ill, undesirable state has arisen in dependence upon a certain foregoing state, and that with the ceasing of the antecedent state the succeeding untoward state will also cease.

What then is the cause of Ill, of the sum of suffering, the total mass of misery that in one form or another afflicts and distresses man? How comes it at all that man is subject to Ill? What, in short, is the immediately preceding condition following upon which Ill for living creatures comes to be? To this question the answer, the obvious answer, is that it is through his having been born that a man becomes subject to whatever ill may afflict him. Had he never been born, ill, of no matter what kind, could never befall him. A self-evident proposition! The immediately preceding condition, then, in dependence upon which the entire sum of suffering arises for living creatures is Birth. Seeing and understanding this, one sees and understands rightly; one is by so much possessed of Right Understanding.

But our enquiry into the arising of Ill, cannot stop here. That we have been born, have come into manifested life, is beyond denial the immediate cause that we are subject to all the ills that visit living creatures, and to the final pangs of dying and parting in pain from all we loved and clung to; but whence comes it that we have been born? We and all creatures that come into life and fall heir to its ills, do so, says the Buddha, because of the existence of the huge, all-comprehending, and—so far as we can see—never-ending process of Becoming that makes, and in fact is, our world. Men are born into existence, so He teaches, because of the ceaseless action of the great process of Kamma (which is only another name for Becoming), an ever present fact to be accepted with what grace we may, not to be explained away or rejected by any subtlety of reasoning, since it is the very world-process wherein we and all creatures and things at each moment of our existence are involved beyond possibility of denial or appeal. To see and understand that this is so, is a part of Right Understanding.

But through what arises this process of becoming that in its ceaseless working brings to birth beings that suffer ill? What is the fuel that sustains this mighty fire?—for to nothing so much as to a fire is to be compared the unceasing procession of cause and consequence that is our world, a fire constantly consuming and ever as constantly renewing itself, so long as is present any fuel upon which to feed. The answer is: The fuel that feeds the fire of Becoming and in its burning brings to birth each new being—this fuel is Attachment, Cleaving, Grasping, that attitude of mind which cleaves to existential life as cleaves the snake to the prey it has seized in its jaws. For in the Buddha's view—and in that of all Indian thought, it may be added—the whole process of the universe of life is based upon mind, kept going by mind and its impulsions. The physical is always and only the manifestation of the mental; it is merely the mental made visible. That which is seen with the physical eye, which takes place in the external world of things perceived by physical sense, is only the belated outcome of what has already taken place in the inner world of things thought, of things conceived and formed in the mind. Already in the past, mind has clutched at and held fast to its own objectified creations, things visible, audible, gustible and so forth; and that clinging and cleaving, now in the present, takes visible form as a fresh being bound by that same cleaving upon the wheel of birth and death. It is the attachment of the mind in a former existence which has maintained the process of Becoming as that process now expresses itself in the birth of a new creature. This to see and understand is another part of Right Seeing and Understanding.

And where does this Cleaving that feeds the flame of Becoming take its rise? The Buddha's reply is: Such Cleaving arises through Craving, through the thirst of the mind after the objects of sense; because of this eager Craving, which is even as that of the snake for the bird it finally snatches and holds, does the mind come to seize and cleave to the things of a sense world. The seeing and understanding of this is another part of Right Seeing.

And how does this Craving arise? Upon what does it depend for its coming to be? As is easily seen, Craving is made possible by, and arises directly from, the fact that there is such a thing as sensation. Only because there is an affection of the various organs of sense by the objects of sense corresponding to them, only because there is an agreeable stimulation of the sense-organs by pleasurable, delightful sights and sounds and odours and savours and contacts and ideas—only because of this does Craving for these pleasure-giving objects arise. Thus seeing and understanding, again one is possessed of Right Seeing, of Right Understanding.

But how does the thing called sensation come to be? The answer is: Sensation comes to be through contact between sense-organ and corresponding sense-object, whether as in the case of touch that contact be immediate, or only mediate as in the case of sight; for without such contact Sensation could never arise. To see this again is to see rightly, to have Right Seeing.

And what makes possible this contact between sense and object of sense? The answer given is: Contact is possible between each of the six senses (mind being classed as the sixth sense) and their corresponding six classes of objects (ideas, corresponding with mind, making the sixth class) because of the existence of senses and objects of sense. In the strict analysis we are here pursuing, this obvious step, for all its obviousness, may not be omitted. This understanding also belongs to Right Understanding.

But how have the six senses and their corresponding classes of objects come to arise? The answer to this is: The six senses and their corresponding objects arise in dependence upon subject and object. That is to say: Because of the existence of the great line of demarcation which separates off all that is, into subject and object, there exists this lesser division—senses, and things which affect those senses. The distinction of sense and sense-object, in effect, is only a variation of the larger, all-inclusive distinction, subject and object. This to see and understand pertains to Right Understanding.

And upon what depends the existence of the distinction, subject and object? The existence of the distinction between subject and object depends upon the existence of consciousness, is the Buddha's reply. Consciousness is that which makes possible the distinction between subject and object. All consciousness is consciousness of something, hence arises the distinction between knower and the thing known, between perceiver and the thing perceived—in a word, between subject and object. To see and understand this constant dependence of the fact subject and object upon the fact consciousness, is another constituent of Right Seeing and Understanding.

And what is that upon which depends the arising of consciousness, the real starting point of any new individual, of any new subject, or—as the Buddha calls it and as it ought rather to be called—subject-object, seeing that there never is and never can be a subject without an object, just as there never is and never can be an object without a subject, subject meaning nothing more than the condition of the perceiving of an object, while object means nothing more than the condition of being perceived by a subject? The answer which the Buddha provides to this important question is: Consciousness, the nucleus around which crystallizes the new being that is arising, comes to be by reason of the life-affirming psychical activities of the being in this particular causational series which last appeared upon the stage of visibly manifested life. These activities, according to the Buddha, reach over from that existence into the present not in any wise as a travelling entity but rather as a communicated vibration, a transmitted impulsion, which takes present shape and form—so to speak—as the consciousness of the nascent individual of the present. To see and understand this arising of a new consciousness, a new "individual," as taking place in dependence upon, by reason of, the life-affirming activities of the "individual" which preceded it in the same line of cause and consequence—this again is to see and understand rightly.

But how has this life-affirming activity come about? What is that upon which depends the arising of the activity that results in the formation of a new conscious being and all the limitation and consequent imperfection and ill involved in the existence of such a being? To this last pertinent question the Buddha replies: Life-affirming action and all it involves of subsequent ill, arises through Avijjā, comes to be because of Ignorance. The ignorance, however, that here is branded as the source of the Sequence of Ill is no vague, vast something hid in the dark womb of the past, no huge, primeval chaos or old night conceived of as mother of this or any other cosmos. Such a conception of Ignorance, Source of Ill, compared with the Buddha's, is as the fancy of a child set beside that of a grown man. The child loves the vague and the mysterious; the man prefers the definite and intelligible. And so it is not in any imagined inchoative past but in the actual, palpitating present, the present that is always coming to be with each fresh moment, that the Buddha bids us look for the fount of things. And the Ignorance with which alone He seeks to deal is Ignorance as it is found here and now in living beings—ignorance of ill, ignorance of the root of ill in Craving, ignorance of the ceasing of ill through the ceasing of Craving and ignorance of the Path that leads to the Ceasing of Ill; all four of them ignorances found where they always have been found and always are to be found, in the ever-present now. Not in any kind of excogitated cosmology but in the data supplied by a closely analytic psychology does the Buddha find the light He has to throw upon the origin of the imperfection we call a world. And this to see and understand, once more is to see and understand rightly.

Here the tracing out of the Sequence of Ill comes to an end. Further than this we cannot hope to go, for this ignorance *we are.* Each living creature that walks the earth is only another example of this ignorance corporealised, made visible, given "local habitation and a name," and to attempt to get behind it were as vain as to seek to climb a height by mounting upon one's own shoulders. Here only one thing is to be done—without delay to set to work and remove the ignorance that is productive of the undesirable thing. For, where ignorance of Ill is removed, where knowledge of the ill of limited, imperfect existence is fully come, there all motive for life-affirming action is withered at the root, and so all such action comes to an end. But where life-affirming activity is wholly at an end, consciousness, the central nucleus of a "self," of a fresh being, no longer can arise. Where consciousness does not arise, subject and object are not to be found, for these are only the inseparable corollaries of consciousness. Where subject and object are not, the six senses and their corresponding fields of action, the six classes of sense-objects, have no existence since they are nothing but an expression of subject and object. Where sense and sense-objects do not exist, there can be no talk of contact taking place between them. Where there is no such contact there can be no sensation. Where there is no sensation of any kind, no craving, there no thirst for pleasurable sensation can arise. Where no craving for sensation arises, there can be no grasping at, no clinging to sensation, or to objects, the external agents in sensation. Where there is no grasping, no clinging to sensation or sense-objects, there the process of becoming is deprived of its motive impulsion and so comes to an end. And where there is no more becoming, there is no more birth and no more of all that follows birth to beings born—pain, distress, disease, old age and death. Thus in strict logical sequence does Ill come to an end through the ending of Ignorance, and whoso sees and understands this, he sees and understand rightly.

And the final component of Right Understanding in respect of Ill is to understand that its untoward chain of succession is broken, its several links sundered and destroyed for ever, by the following of the Excellent Eightfold Path made known by a Buddha.

These then are the four chief elements that go to make up Right Understanding—the understanding that here is Ill; the understanding of the sequence in which that Ill arises; the understanding of the sequence in which that Ill is made to cease; and the understanding of the Path through which the sequence of Ill is made to cease. But it is not given to any of the sons of men to attain to a full and complete measure of this understanding upon the first occasion of its being put before him in words. The approach to fullness of Right Understanding can only be gradual, proceeding by slow degrees from a bare intellectual assent to the truth of its terms, to a conviction of the whole man that the case veritably is as said, and the final absorption of the being of the man himself in the truth he has realised. Such absorption is really the goal towards which the Buddha's teaching points the way, the final achievement of whoso follows that way to its ultimate end. Needless to say, that end can only be reached after long effort along the road that leads thither. And one of the stages along this road is that elementary measure of Right Understanding, which consists simply in understanding what is evil and what is good—that is to say, what is that course of conduct which thwarts, hinders, retards progress towards the deliverance of the mind from attachment to existential life, and what is that course which promotes, conduces to, makes for that deliverance; as also in understanding, what is the root that nourishes these two modes of behaviour, from what root springs that mode of behaviour which hinders deliverance, from what root grows that which helps towards it.

Whoso has attained to this initial measure of Right Seeing and Understanding, he sees that killing and stealing and lying and lasciviousness and the drinking of strong drinks are things that present obstacles and hindrances upon his path towards deliverance from Ill, he understands that they clog and hamper his feet so that they scarce can move forward upon that path; and so seeing, so understanding, he eschews and shuns them, to the end that his progress towards the goal may not be uselessly delayed. Such an one also sees the root that nourishes these hindering evils, understands that it has three shoots or sprouts. First: Selfish Craving, the desire to have and to hold for oneself alone. Second: Hatred, anger, aversion to one's fellow creatures in any of the manifold forms such aversion may assume. And third: Delusion, the delusion that one is possessed of a self separate and distinct from that of every other creature; which delusion may be said to be the shoot that bears the other two, since craving to possess for self and hatred of others than self, obviously are possible only where reigns the delusion that a separate self exists.

And the man who has attained to this earlier measure of Right Understanding, he also understands what is good, what is that which makes for deliverance from all Ill. He understands that it consists in abstaining from killing and stealing and lasciviousness and lying and drinking of drinks that take the wits away, and shapes his life accordingly. He likewise sees and understands that the root of good, the root of all that makes for liberation, for freedom, for salvation from suffering and distress, lies in selflessness, in the cessation of all longing and striving for self alone; in love to all that lives, in ceasing from every form of hatred and ill-will; and finally in wisdom, in clear-eyed perception of the utter baselessness in truth or fact, of the notion of separate selfhood. He sees and understands that in this clear-eyed perception, once in such wise attained that never again can it be lost, lies the sure source of all deeds of kindness and good-will, all deeds that have for their object, never the heedless aggrandizement and gratification of self, but always the good, the advantage and benefit of others.

Such Right Understanding as this, when come to full fruition, become realization, even as the other, is the last achievement of Buddhist effort; it too means and is final deliverance from the round of birth and death. And it also is to be realized through an approach made up of many slow and gradual stages. At first glimpsing but faintly, comprehending only dimly, what deeds are good and what evil, what deeds further and what delay his deliverance, a man begins, half-heartedly it may be, and by no means at all times, to endeavour to do only such deeds as are good and to shun those that are evil. The effort put forth is not very great, so that the result achieved is not very great either;

but such as it is, it is not without its due effect. The slight degree of success in Right Doing thus achieved, reacts upon the slight degree of Right Understanding that led to the effort made in that direction; in duly corresponding slight measure it strengthens and clarifies that understanding, makes what was little a tiny degree less little, makes the little to be somewhat more. And now with Right Understanding thus in some small measure become clearer and stronger than it was before, the next effort of the man towards good and away from evil, is by so much a less half-hearted, a more vigorous and determined effort, and hence achieves a greater degree of success. This success again reacts upon the understanding so as to clarify and strengthen it yet more, and again the understanding, thus endowed with this fresh accession of clarity and strength, makes possible a still higher degree of effort after right conduct. The whole procedure is like that of the cleansing of hands or feet. "As hand washes hand and foot washes foot," says a Sutta, "so right conduct is purified by Right Understanding and Right Understanding by right conduct." Thus on and on these twain, conduct and understanding, by the mutual strengthening influence of each upon the other, gain depth and fullness in increasingly larger degrees, until at length the highest possible degree of both is reached, the supreme summit of Right Understanding attained, and the mind delivered "with the deliverance that comes of wisdom"; that which in its feeble, elementary beginnings was the first step upon the Path, having become in its final perfection the last step, the winning to the goal.

Thus from lowliest levels does the Path lead on to the loftiest heights. Thus may each man, just where he is and as he is, begin to take those steps which only maintained and persisted in, will bring him at length whither all the great and noble of the earth have made their way. For they too once stood where we now stand in the climb up the mount of perfection. But by patient, continuous endeavour they have attained; and even so we also may attain through the perfection of Right Understanding.

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CHAPTER II

RIGHT MINDEDNESS

In naming the various members of the Eightfold Path in English, the Pāli word "sammā" is translated throughout as "right," but this is so, not because "right" is really the best English equivalent for "sammā" but only because it is that English word which, with the least straining of its own proper meaning, can be used in every instance where "sammā" occurs in the original Pāli. As is only too often and yet unavoidably the case where translation is being made from an Oriental into an Occidental tongue, it is very far indeed from being an entirely satisfactory equivalent. The real meaning of "sammā" is "superlatively right," so that the nearest one-word equivalent of it in English would be "supreme," "perfect," "excellent," or some other word to the same or similar effect. Hence, instead of calling the various component parts of the Eightfold Path, "Right Understanding," "Right Mindedness," and so forth, it would be much nearer the mark to call them "Perfect Understanding," "Perfect Mindedness," and so on. There is only one objection to doing so and that is, that it might lead the reader into thinking that the Eightfold Path is followed only by men who have reached perfection, whereas, as a matter of fact, it is followed by men at all degrees of approach to perfection—by men aiming at perfection, rather than by those who have achieved it.

And yet, if the word "perfect" is anywhere at all applicable in speaking of the divisions of the Eightfold Path, it is applicable to that division of it which is called in the Pāli "Sammā-saṅkappa". In keeping with its fellow divisions, we call this one "Right Mindedness," but in strict truth it ought rather to be called "Perfect Mindedness," for it is intended to denote the attitude of mind of the man who has reached the end of the Eightfold Path of the Noble.

Here, be it said, some misapprehension is apt to arise as regards the exact nature of the Eightfold Path with reference to the relation of its component members, one to another. Again it is the insuperable difficulties besetting the attempt to translate accurately out of an Oriental into an Occidental idiom that are to blame, coupled perhaps with the yet greater difficulty of transplanting ideas, without damage, from the soil in which they were born, and trying to make them intelligible, at home, in another environment so very different as is the intellectual atmosphere of modern Europe from that of the India of twenty-five hundred years ago. But the fact is, that although the "Path" is called a path, and its eight component divisions are definitely and individually enumerated as such, those divisions are not at all to be thought of as following one another in order of time in precisely the same order as they are written on paper, as though they were so many rungs on a ladder, the first mentioned being the lowest, the next to receive mention the next highest above it, and so on through all the eight, the last in order of mention having to be regarded as the highest of all.

A much truer idea of the "Path" is to be gained by picturing it not as a path at all but as a rope—a rope composed of eight closely intertwisted strands, up which some climber essays to climb, by its means pulling himself higher and higher, hand over hand. In the course of such a climb it will happen that at one moment the climber's fingers will come into closer, more immediate and clinging contact with one particular strand than with any other, and at another moment with another particular strand more than with any of the remaining seven that make up the rope; yet all the while he is climbing, the climber is clinging to the whole rope, with the help of the whole rope making his upward way. Thus it is exactly with the man who is following the Noble Eightfold Path. At any one point in his progress along that Path, some one or other of its component members may be that which stands out most prominently in his practice, so that any one looking at him might be fairly well justified in saying that he was practising Right Understanding or Right Speech or Right Recollectedness, according as the case might be. Yet as a simple matter of fact, no one member of the Eightfold Path can be practised to any extent without its being accompanied by some degree of attainment in all the remaining seven members. A man who has made any progress in Right Understanding worth speaking of, has done so only because he has attained some success in the practice of Right Action, Right Recollectedness, and the rest. A man who has achieved somewhat of Right Action, by that fact shows that he also possesses something of Right Understanding, Right Effort, and the other components of the Path. While the man who has won to any noteworthy degree of Right Recollectedness and Right Concentration, thereby demonstrates that he must also have made in some measure his, Right Understanding and Right Action.

Bearing in mind this close intertwining of the different members of the Path, it will no longer come as a surprising anomaly to be told that that member which is second in order of mention, when come to fullness, is the achievement of the man who has reached the end of the Path. It will be understood that to say that this is so, by no means imports that the traveller on the Path can attain fullness of Right Mindedness (coupled of course with Right Understanding, the member of the Path which precedes it in order of mention) in entire independence of any of the further mentioned constituents of the Path—with this alone attaining to all that the Path has to offer him. It will be understood that the man who has come to the full fruition of his travel on the Path—to Perfect Understanding and Perfect Mindedness—does so because he has already achieved in perfection Right Speech, Right Behaviour, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Recollectedness, and Right Concentration, otherwise he never could have gained the height on which he stands.

And yet the idea of the Path as a series of successive steps possesses a certain amount of justification in Buddhist teaching; with this difference, however, that the arrangement of the "steps" is not octuple but triple. In this threefold division, Right Speech, Right Behaviour, and Right Livelihood, are classed together under the heading of Morality or Virtue. Right Effort, Right Recollectedness, and Right Concentration come under the one division of Mind Culture. While Right Understanding and Right Mindedness, taken together, make up what is called "Wisdom" or Insight.

In this triple division of the Path, the observance of the first member thereof is meant to be the especial care of the ordinary man of the world as he pursues his daily round of work in a world of men like himself. But he does not and cannot observe the precepts of virtue or righteous conduct unless at the same time he possesses some idea of mental control and insight —in some small measure has made himself possessor of these accomplishments. As for Mind Culture, this also may be practised by the man living the wordly life—by the layman, that is to say; but it will be by one who is not wholly immersed in worldly business; it will be by one who somewhat can loosen the grip of the round of worldly cares, and has time to give himself seriously to the training and culture of the mind, the directing of thought in right and proper channels, having previously practised Right Conduct with success and acquired a certain amount of Insight or Wisdom. While the third member in this threefold classification of the Path, Wisdom to wit, is that for which he specially strives who has left the life of home behind, and betaken himself to the life of homelessness. If he makes the use he ought to make of the opportunities his new manner of life affords, in no long time he should find himself making speedy progress toward Wisdom, toward full and perfect insight into the true nature of things ; and with the attainment of that Insight, toward deliverance from the bonds of birth and death, the chance and change of existence in any of the three worlds of earth-life, lower heavenly life, or higher heavenly life ; being already perfected in Right Conduct and in Mind Culture. This last achievement, the achievement of Wisdom, is peculiarly that of the man who lives the homeless life, the "monk" so called, but in a few rare cases it is also possible to one still living the life of the home ; only, it need scarcely be said, its attainment while in that state of life, is more than a little difficult. As a Sutta sings:

> A den of strife is household life,
> And filled with toil and need;
> But free and high as the open sky
> Is the life the homeless lead.

But what now is Right Mindedness? What is that perfect attitude of mind that is part of Wisdom, following as it does, and *necessarily* following, upon a right understanding of the nature of the world and of what we call "self," since a bare understanding of anything is incomplete and really undeserving of the name of understanding if it does not issue in a definite change of attitude in a man?

First of all, Right or Perfect Mindedness is that attitude of mind which turns away serene and unmoved from everything that this or any other world has to offer.

This attitude of turning away from the things of the world is sometimes called renunciation, but the term is rather a misnomer, for it contains a suggestion of privation and loss, and thus of sorrow, which is very far indeed from being the experience of the man who truly is right-minded. Such a man has in reality renounced nothing, and far from feeling pain in what he does, knows only pleasure. He does not really give up anything: it is—if such an expression be permissible—the things of the world that give up themselves, the man's sole feeling being one of relief, as of a traveller who suddenly finds himself loosed from a burden that long has oppressed him and held him back on his journey. The man who truly has won to Right Mindedness is in the same position as the boy or girl who has left the childhood stage of life behind and come to maturer years. Such cannot be said to give up anything when they forsake the toys of the nursery for the larger interests and occupations of adolescence. No sense of grief and loss whatever accompanies this transition to a new sphere of experience. It is all as natural a change, and made with as little reluctance, as that of the man who has hitherto treasured with care a hoard of copper coins, and now is offered in exchange as large a heap of pieces of gold. Such an one abandons his former treasure without a pang to take possession of the richer treasure now put in his way. Even as natural and as free from suggestion of pain or loss is the renunciation—to call it so—of the man of Right Mindedness. Asceticism, in the sense of self-torment is as alien to the Buddhist system of training at this point as at any other. Self-torment for mere self-torment's sake is as vain, as vulgar and as hurtful as are sensuality and self-indulgence, and no less so here at the end of the Path than at its beginning and middle. When the right-minded man "gives up" the world, he does so simply because he has finally found out, beyond all shadow of dubiety, that it holds nothing for a moment worth the keeping. If he "renounces" its gifts, it is only because he can do naught else, having seen for himself their utter worthlessness as a possession. The multitudinous cares and anxieties that vex those who have not yet attained to Right Mindedness, touch him no more who so has attained, for he perceives that the ground whence their troublous legions arose is no real ground at all, but a sheer gulf of emptiness and self-engendered delusion. Here is no cause for sorrow in any least degree, but rather for gladness and rejoicing. Or if shadow of sorrow does come, it is never for himself that the man of Right Mindedness sorrows, but only for those others, his fellow men, who still writhe and wrestle in the grip of miseries that are wholly of their own making. And forthwith that sorrow assumes the form of a lively pity and compassion for all the agony of earth, and of an equally quick and ardent desire to help allay and lessen it. As regards himself, the man who has attained to Right Mindedness seeks nothing, for he needs nothing; as regards others, his attitude is one of boundless goodwill and friendliness, of desire to help and succour all without distinction or reserve.

For this is what happens to a man when he comes to Right Understanding and Right Mindedness. Hitherto, like all not thither arrived, he has lived and worked only that he might have secure benefit and advantage for a little separate something he has called "himself". He has turned the energies at his disposal towards the aggrandisement in one way or another of that "self," nor ever dreamed of any other possible course, although, to be sure, his labours at times may have taken an apparently lofty and sublimated form. Yet at bottom the gain sought, however refined, has been again sought for self in one or another shape. The man has steadly diverted the stream of energy under his control, in the direction of his own private and particular good. But with the coming of Right Mindedness, all this is changed. No longer is the fund of energy at his command turned into the shut-in reservoir of private, personal ends; now it is let loose into the open channel of the ceaselessly flowing energies that feed and renew the world. From being a closed pond where the inflowing water was held and confined a prisoner, and like such a pond, apt to become dead and foul as stagnant water does, his nature has become a conduit, and like a conduit now is always sweet and clean through the continuous flow of the water ever passed on to new work of feeding and refreshing. In short, when a human being reaches the third stage of the threefold Path of Morality, Mental Culture and Wisdom, when he comes to the fullness of Right Understanding, and through such understanding to the perfection of Right Mindedness, all that individually controlled energy which formerly was diverted to and expended in the channels of private ends and aims, and so in some sort lost to the universe of life at large, is now automatically set free for the service of that universe, and goes to help raise all life some little portion more near to the goal of deliverance from the thraldom of sentient, conditioned existence. The man of Right Mindedness—*each* man of Right Mindedness, so soon as he attains thereto, by that fact becomes, each in his own measure, a saviour of the world. Hapless indeed would be the plight of mankind on its journey, were there no more than just one "saviour of the world".

Herein lies the justification, nay, the imperative need for the man who shall follow the life of homelessness. For while it is necessary and right that there should be those who shall live the household life and carry on the world's affairs, finding in that employ all the opportunity they can ask for the cultivation of right conduct in each of its branches, it is no less necessary and right that there should be those who, leaving the life of the home behind, go forth into homelessness, in this mode of life finding the conditions proper to the speedier attainments of Wisdom, of Perfect Understanding and Mindedness.

As long as the world lasts there must be these two orders of human life—the natural order, and, what for want of any better term we must call, the "spiritual" order, without contention arising as to which is the superior of the other, since each is equally necessary in a world of human beings. So long as there are those who give themselves to the perpetuation of the species and all that this involves of the world's work, so long also must there be those who shall give themselves to the maintenance, and so to speak, the keeping open of the way by which the world and all its works may be transcended, and a higher, further goal attained.

The householder has his task, his burden of work for the world; but so also has the homeless one. In attaining to Right Mindedness the latter becomes perforce a worker for the world, and though in a widely different way from the householder, his work is yet not any the less of sure and telling value; for man does not and cannot live by bread alone. The work of the householder may be seen and felt and handled by all, and the work of the homeless one is often a silent and unseen and very solitary work; yet it would go as ill with mankind were the latter to cease from his hidden and unregarded labours as it would did the former forsake his more open and obvious work for the world. For the homeless one who is justified in his vocation, has his work in the silent, unseen realm of mind or thought—that realm where all that is in the world is first fashioned and wrought. There it is that the primal foundations of the world are laid, whether ill or well; and the precise business of the homeless one is to lay them well, so far as in him lies so to do. His task it is to build into the thought-foundations of the world, fair stones, true stones so that upon such foundations latterly there may arise fair, true structures of words and deeds, fairer, truer structures than yet have come to be.

Or, to change the metaphor, since after all, the figure of a building of solid stone is not the fittest whereby to represent a flowing, mobile world, it is the work of the man of Right Mindedness to pour into the running waters of the stream of thought that makes a world, all of sweetness and freshness he is able to gather in the course of his own inward strivings, that so those waters may become less foul and bitter, may gradually grow more fresh and sweet. His task and toil it is to dwell unhating among those filled with hate, that they may learn to cease from hate and turn to love; to live unfearing among the fearful that at length they may rid them of their fearfulness and learn to trust; to abide unlusting among the lustful that they may be moved to shake themselves free from the cruel bondage of their lust and taste the sweets of freedom; all the while sending forth thoughts of uttermost goodwill to every fellow creature, desirous only for their benefit and well being, seeking only to aid them all, of every degree from lowest to highest in the great scale of being. And if in outward seeming he somewhat separates himself from his fellow men, it is only that he may unite himself the more closely to them on that level of being where men can come more close to one another than ever they can come in the ordinary life of the world—on the level of mind and heart. Here the right-minded man thinks steadily this one strong thought: "As these are, so am I; as I am, so are these," and fulfilled of that thought, he harbours no more the vain, delusion-born distinctions "I" and "thou," works for the deliverance from Ill neither of this being nor of that, whether called "self" or "another", but for the deliverance unrestricted of all that lives, of all life. Foregoing self, for him the universe becomes "I"—the only "I" that henceforth he can know.

Such is Right Mindedness in its fullest manifestation: renunciation of anything for self, joined to a universal goodwill and helpfulness toward others, working in the realm of causes, the domain of thought. But, as must never be forgotten when dealing with the different divisions of the Eightfold Path, the approach to perfection in each is only made gradually and by slow degrees. There are no miraculous leaps in the progress along the Path. Even when there seem to be such they have been gradually led up to and prepared for by the accumulated action of the past. "Drop by drop is the pitcher filled," said the Buddha, speaking of the work of purifying the mind; and it is only so, only little by little, that the perfect attitude of mind which is Right Mindedness, like every other accomplishment on the Path, is to be acquired. Even while still engaged in the life of the household, a man may begin to take his first steps towards its cultivation. In that mode of life is to be found abundant opportunity for the renunciation of selfish ends for the sake of the weal of well-loved wife or child—endless occasions for the expression in word and deed of goodwill and pure, disinterested, friendly helpfulness. The limits within which these are displayed at first may be somewhat narrow and circumscribed, being those of the man's own family and its immediate connections; but this is a beginning, and a beginning has always to be made somewhere. Later on, as he grows in vision and sympathy, extending his unselfish goodwill and helpfulness beyond the confines of his own family to a wider circle, all in good time the man will come to practise self-abnegation for the sake of the well-being of his village, then of his district, then of his country, his goodwill ever widening its scope until at length it may know no barrier whatever, and include all mankind in the warmth of its boundless embrace.

As a general rule, however, it is only the homeless one, tied to no race or place, who may wholly dwell on these fair heights of boundless goodwill to all the world. Yet, for a few strong natures it is possible thus to set at naught the many disabilities of the household life and reach to Wisdom in its fullness, to Right Understanding and Mindedness, while still involved in the tasks of the work-a-day world. Rare though such cases are, by their mere possibility they demonstrate as nothing else could, the essential unity, even in their great diversity, of the household and the homeless life. It is "natural" to follow the household life; but it is no less "natural" to follow the homeless life should that other be felt as a fetter upon growing aspirations, and an overmastering need be experienced for a freer air and a wider sky. In both, the same goal may be kept in view and steadily pursued. Yet withal it remains true that in the life of homelessness the way is made more smooth to the feet and many a troublesome obstacle and stumbling-block removed; and so in this mode of life by far the greater portion of mankind may attain to Right Mindedness in that perfection which means the ending of all self-seeking, goodwill universal and boundless, and an attitude of helpfulness, infinitely free, toward every living creature, low or high, in all the wide universe of life.

CHAPTER III

RIGHT SPEECH

THE third member of the Noble Eightfold Path in order of mention, is Sammāvācā or Right Speech, and with our arrival thereat we enter upon the consideration of that section of the Path which in the tripartite classification of its component parts is called Sīla, or Morality, or Right Behaviour. Looked at in one way, this section of the Path may be regarded as its first, its initial section; for the observance of the rules of right behaviour or morality is the primary and indispensable condition of all progress upon the Path. This is true both for the householder and for the homeless one. But whereas the homeless one's observance of moral behaviour is, or ought to be, the outcome of a particular and constantly maintained attitude of mind (the precise business of the homeless one and his sole title to follow such a mode of life being his maintenance of this attitude of mind), the householder's adherence to the rules of right behaviour are based almost wholly upon a deliberate and heedful attention to these rules in themselves.

The predominant characteristic of the life of the latter is active doing in word or in deed, or, it may be, in both word and deed; and the prescriptions as to right behaviour enumerated in the third, fourth, and fifth members of the Noble Eightfold Path are simply the rules meant to be observed in the course of all his doing, by the householder who takes the Buddha as his guide.

Such a householder, as he goes about his daily work in the world, is advised in all his activities to give heed to these three things, that his speech is right, that his actions are right, and that the means by which he earns his livelihood are right. At present, however, we have only to deal with the first of these three injunctions as to right behaviour, and therefore now ask: What precisely is that kind of doing to which in the Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddha is given the name of Right Speech?

Right Speech as taught by the Enlightened One is comprehended in four distinct prescriptions: That men should speak only that which is true, that they should not speak what is false; that they should not speak evil of others, that they should refrain from slander; that they should not use angry and abusive language towards any fellow man, that they should speak kindly and courteously to all; and finally, that they should not indulge in pointless, foolish talk but let their speech be sensible and to the purpose.

To dwell in any detail upon these injunctions as to rightness in speech were a thankless and, to some extent also, a needless labour, so familiar are they in one form or another to every intelligent person who knows anything at all about right behaviour. They are the commonplaces of every system of moral teaching, ancient or modern, Eastern or Western, religious or a-religious. Yet there is one thing well worthy of note about the Buddha's statement of the precepts of right behaviour, a feature that distinguishes His mode of presenting them from nearly every other system of morals, and that is its purely utilitarian nature. The Buddha's exposition of right behaviour is devoid of even the least trace of the notion that by doing "right" and shunning "wrong" a man will win the approval of some being or beings greater than himself, possessed of power absolute to shape his destinies according to their own good-will and pleasure; and that in return for his "right" doing, for his acting according to their wishes, such a being or beings will bestow on him as reward happy circumstances in this or in some other world; while if he does "wrong," acts contrary to their decrees, they will mete out to him as punishment for the same, unhappiness and suffering, either here or hereafter. From any such idea as this the teaching of the Buddha is wholly free. If in obedience to the recommendation of the Enlightened One, a man practises Right Speech, he does so without the slightest reference to what any superior being or beings may think of his action. He is to practise rightness in speaking, solely on account of the beneficial results to himself and others that will follow upon such practice, these results never proceeding from the capricious, self-determined decree of any superior being or beings, but inhering in the very nature of things as they have come to be, forming part and parcel of the essential constitution of the universe of cause and effect. All that the follower of the Buddha does when he obeys any of the precepts of morality enunciated by his Teacher, is to follow that course of conduct which is most in harmony with the fundamental laws of existence, of *all* existence, seen existence as well as unseen existence, physical as well as psychical life—as these laws have been ascertained and verified by that Teacher. When his actions are in harmony with these laws, happiness will come to him and will follow him as a natural result, without intervention or need for intervention on the part of any superior power, as surely and inevitably as his own shadow that never leaves him. While if his actions are contrary to these laws, then pain, altogether apart from what any higher power may or may not do, will as certainly follow him as the wheel of the cart follows the heel of the ox that draws it. A man's own deed is the one sole power that brings him happiness or unhappiness, and necessity for the intervention of any other there is none.

In the language in which the Buddhist Scriptures are written, it is noteworthy that there are no words exactly corresponding in meaning to the English words "right" and "wrong". The words which for want of any more suitable equivalent are usually so translated, bear rather the meaning respectively of "skilful" or "profitable," and "unskilful" or "unprofitable" than any of the loose, vague, indefinite ideas which the words "right" and "wrong" convey to the generality of ears that hear them. To refrain from lying and slander and harsh speech and idle chatter, is, for a Buddhist, to speak skilfully, to use the tongue to profit and to advantage. Contrariwise, to utter falsehood, to speak evil of one's fellows, to use abusive language towards anyone, or to indulge in frivolous conversation, is, in regard to speech, to act unskilfully, unprofitably, to disadvantage.

The end and aim toward which this skill in verbal action is directed, the profit or advantage to be secured thereby, is, as already said, happiness in this and in all worlds. In a group of human beings, a society of any sort, where truthful, kindly, courteous, sensible speech is the general practice, the happiness and general well-being of the members of such a group of human beings will obviously be much increased by their adherence to such a practice, and correspondingly decreased in the measure that they depart from it; while, where the opposite practice is followed, where lying, slanderous, harsh, and senseless speech is indulged in, the lives of the members of the society where such is the case cannot but be the more unpleasant for the fact.

But there is a further profit and advantage in right action beyond this the most obvious sort. Right Action does indeed here and now, promote the well-being of all concerned, of "self" as well as of "others," and if it did not do so there would, for the ordinary person, be but little reason for practising it; but it has another and, to say the least, an equally important, consequence.

To a follower of the Buddha, Right Action, Morality, in the ultimate analysis, is a recognition expressed in deeds, of the fact that separate, individual existence is nothing but a delusion—a very potent and not easily penetrable delusion, it is true, but still a delusion. Moral behaviour is the acknowledgment in the acts of daily life—and to acknowledge a truth in one's actions is perhaps the sincerest, as it is certainly the most impressive method of doing so—that these other beings I see around me are not really what they seem to be, separate and apart from me, but in some way are myself—if it be permissible to entertain the idea of self at all; that in refraining from doing them hurt, I am refraining from hurting myself; that in promoting their welfare, I am in reality promoting my own. It is a practical recognition that these terms "self" and "others," "own welfare" and "others' welfare," at bottom are meaningless and false, and that there is only one welfare and happiness to be secured—the welfare and happiness of all beings that exist, in which happiness, as one of those existing beings, what calls itself "I" perforce will have its share. If I refrain from deceiving others by false speech, it is because in lying I should only be practising deceit upon myself, and no sensible person would wish to do that. If I circulate false reports about my neighbour's weaknesses, I am really slandering myself—an altogether foolish proceeding. If, giving way to annoyance and anger, I use harsh and abusive language towards another, I am cursing and abusing myself—which is the act of one not quite sane. And if I indulge in silly and pointless talk, again it is myself I injure, as I fritter away time and mental powers with idle nonsense.

Now this recognition that "self" and "others" are not the separate centres of interest that to ordinary perception they appear to be, the acknowledgment that for each human being there is only one true interest—that of the whole body of life to which he belongs; and that this interest is best to be secured by the extirpation and extinction in each individual of all sense of separate interest, all sense of separate self-existence indeed—this is the goal towards which all Buddhist teaching, partly explicitly and partly implicitly, points the way. For the ordinary man of the world, a very effective method of combating and finally overthrowing the false sense of separate self-existence is *to act as if that sense were a false one, to act as if the "self" were a delusion.* And this, as already said, is just what all right behaviour is—a recognition in act that there is no separation between the interests of "self" and the interests of "others". It is a practical recognition that another's welfare is my welfare, another's distress my distress. Hence if the assumption on which it is based be a correct one, in the simple following of courses of right conduct the proof will be obtained that that assumption is correct; belief in it will more and more be strengthened as those right courses continue to be followed, until at length it will pass into an overmastering conviction that the case actually is so; that it is no mere assumption, but a fact; such conviction ending ultimately in a full and perfect realization of its truth. The teaching of the Buddha is that this assumption is a correct one; to act upon His instructions as to conduct is therefore for the ordinary person the best, the most readily accessible means of proving its truth. By following these instructions, such a person will eventually arrive at the realisation of the last, the ultimate truth of life—the truth that all sense of "me" and "mine" is sheer delusion; and so attain to the unshakable peace, the calm security of him who is harried no more by the multitudinous hopes and fears for own well-being that make the perpetual misery and distress of most of mankind.

The sequence of happening whereby the deeds of each man are brought back to himself is called in Buddhist writings Kamma—a word which, despite its strange and unfamiliar guise, stands for something that is no more mysterious than the law of cause and effect (already well known to us in the visible physical world) translated as regards the field of its activity, to what we may call the psychical or mental world, the world of unseen supra-physical activity.

As most frequently expounded in the West, Kamma or—to give it its better known Samskṛṭ name—Karma, is conceived of as a law that renders back to each individual in some future life—or it may be in this present one—the due result of his present doing in the shape of happiness or unhappiness; and this way of presenting it is to many minds the most intelligible, and to some minds the *only* intelligible way of doing so. For the great mass of unreflecting humanity, and even a considerable proportion of the reflecting moiety, are still "naïve realists," more or less, in all that concerns psychic life. The better informed and more reflective minds of our race have already abandoned, or are fast abandoning, that naïve realism once so prevalent, according to which we are supposed to be living in a solid, substantial world made up of positively real, discrete objects such as mountains, rivers and plains, stones, plants and trees, to say nothing of houses and tables and chairs. But it is now clearly seen by most people who take the trouble to think about it, that there is no really reliable testimony available in proof of the existence of any such objects. It is perceived that, strictly analysed, the existence of such things or of a world made up of such things, is no more than an inference drawn from the data furnished us by our own sensations, and that the inference is by no means bound to be correct, that it may very possibly be a quite mistaken one; hence, that the "world" we assume to exist is only a convenient term by which to designate the totality of our sensations; that it is a system of "things" invented solely by ourselves in order to account for these sensations, and that it might very easily be something altogether different from what we imagine it to be. In short, thinking people no longer care positively to assert the existence of any specific object, but hold all terms indicative of the existence of actual, specific objects to be merely a convenient manner of designating a certain associated group of sensations, a method of summarising these sensations, and never to be taken as indicating belief in the veritable existence of objects exactly corresponding to the terms used. When we name an object, it is only of some sensation or set of sensations that we are speaking or ever can speak; for, apart from sensation, we know and can know absolutely nothing of any "object".

But though thus abandoning the artless realism, as regards physical things, that once dominated men's minds, all do not yet see that we are guilty of an exactly parallel naïve realism when, in dealing with matters pertaining to the psychic realm, we speak as if there actually existed such things as real, discrete, positive "selves". These two kinds of naïve realism, if we take the trouble to look closely into them, stand on all fours. Just as we know nothing of "objects"—physical objects—save in so far as they do something, as some effect is produced upon one or other of our sensoria, the name of the object being nothing more or less than the name for such an effect; so, strictly analysed, we know nothing of a "self" save in so far as *it* too does something, as some effects of a psychic nature are produced—the word "self," closely scrutinised, being nothing more or less than the name for the psychic action, of whatever nature it may be, that is taking place at any given moment. What indeed can we know of any "self" apart from some form or other of internal psychic activity? As little as of an "object" stripped of all qualities—that is, of all possibility of producing effects upon a human sensorium. Where no action is taking place we cannot rightly say that anything has existence, and this must hold good as well in the psychic domain as in the physical. Where no psychical activity is taking place, we have no warrant for saying that anything is present, call it "self" or by any other name we choose. It is always activity and nothing else but activity that is perceived in either domain, the physical or the psychical, and a "self" that does nothing is as hypothetical as an "object" devoid of qualities. The one like the other is a pure chimera; or if that seems too strong a way of stating the case, at the very least they are unproved and unnecessary assumptions. With a little trouble, it is possible to state all the facts of the physical and the psychical domain and to deal with them in quite an intelligible manner, using terms of force instead of terms of substance; and every reasonable person will surely agree that it is preferable to do this, inasmuch as it comes into closer agreement with the actual truth—so far as actual truth can be ascertained or guessed at by creatures whose every mental operation, by their very nature, is carried out under the conditions of Avijjā or Unknowingness. Under that darkening veil perforce we have to do all our perceiving and thinking, but in admitting this we yet are bound to make the most accurate observations that it is in our power to make, and correspondingly to draw therefrom the most correct deductions it is in our power to draw. Doing this, we are driven to the conclusion that we know and can know nothing either of discrete "objects" or discrete "selves" in themselves; and of that of which we know and can know nothing, how can we rightly say that such a thing exists?

If, however, despite all such considerations, we still persist in holding that there are "things in themselves" or "selves in themselves," we may as well recognise first as last, that we are forsaking the solid ground of known fact for the vague and uncertain realm of fancy and imagination. But this is precisely what a follower of the Buddha may not do and still remain a follower of the Buddha. For the teaching of that Enlightened One is nothing else but the outcome of the most determined attempt that has yet been made upon our earth to have done with all fancies, and get down to facts and to nothing but facts.

One of the facts ascertained as result of that endeavour, and the most significant and pregnant of all in its consequences, is this of the non-existence, the absence from the universe of manifested things and creatures, of any constant, persisting substratum in the whole flux of sensations, perceptions, mentations, and consciousnesses that make up a human being. To perceive this fact for oneself—after it has been pointed out by a Buddha or by one taught of a Buddha—is the one essential mark of a follower of the Buddha. Hence when a Buddhist speaks of Kamma, or Karma—the law of cause and effect as operative in the psychic realm—however he may sometimes present it, having regard to minds unable to grasp it as it actually is in its perfect purity, what he really has in mind is a great law, universally active, which from moment to moment ceaselessly brings into existence the totality of sentient creatures that are found in a universe. Each such creature is nothing else than a representation of the Kammic cause that gives it birth. It is merely a force or energy made visible, audible, tangible, and so forth, as the case may be, and is as purely temporary in its nature as are the waves upon the surface of a lake, each of which is no more than a momentarily manifested configuration, visible to the eye, giving evidence of the existence of a pulse of vibration passing through surface water. If then a Buddhist says that men reap the results of their present deeds in future lives in the shape of happy circumstances as the "reward" of "good" deeds, and unhappy circumstances as the "punishment" of "evil" deeds, it must never be forgotten that this is only a manner of speaking. What a Buddhist really means when he makes such a statement, put as nearly as may be in the language of scientific accuracy, is that men's deeds, whether "good" or "evil," all pass into and become part of the great stream of doing or activity or Kamma that makes and is a universe, and producing their due effect, each according to its kind, give rise to a wave—so to speak—upon the sea of sentient life, that presents itself to our perception as a sentient creature, the said creature being the sensible embodiment and corporealisation of the deeds that gave it birth (which deeds had else remained unsensed), exactly as the wave on a sheet of water, visible to human eyes, is the embodiment, the corporealisation of the pulse of vibration passing through the sheet of water; and that this creature experiences happiness or unhappiness, not in any sense as "reward" or "punishment," but simply as the natural, inevitable outcome of the deeds of which it is the expression. In other words, a human being—or any other being for that matter—does not *get* happiness or unhappiness, but it *is* happiness or unhappiness embodied, made visible, as the due result of a certain body of past doing.

In the teaching of the Buddha the real motive for doing "good" and shunning "evil" is thus seen to be, not the procuring of happiness for self (since such a being, regarded as a continuously existing entity simply does not exist), but instead, the wish, the desire, the aspiration, to contribute nothing to the stream of cause and effect that is a world, which will be liable to breed as result unhappiness and misery—that is to say, which will cause to arise living beings that will have to endure unhappiness and misery. Compassion, fellow-feeling, and not selfish regard for own welfare, is thus seen to be the real root and foundation of Buddhist morality. Self-regard is simply impossible where it is clearly understood that there is no such thing as a continuing "self," and therefore no "own welfare" in any positive sense of the words. The question: Will this deed bring me suffering?—has no place in Buddhist morality, regarded in its ultimate significance. The simple question asked is: Will this deed lead to suffering? The ideas held by the genuine follower of the Buddha as to the entirely provisional nature of the distinctions "self" and "others" make it impossible for him to ask: Will this deed bring suffering to *me*?

But since the vast majority of mankind are under the domination of the idea that the words "self" and "others" stand for permanent distinctions, that there actually exist discrete, continuous entities; and since all ordinary thought—and therefore speech—is based upon such an idea, Buddhist morality may perhaps most comprehensibly be studied by the many as a rule of conduct based upon that saying of the Buddha: "As I am so are these; as these are, so am I,"—that is, upon a feeling of compassion and pity for "others" as distinct from "self," and a resolve not to do anything that will cause to "others" a sensation that would not be agreeable to "self". And since the insidious idea of self is not easily to be suppressed, but will persist intruding itself, then one may go on to say, if one chooses, that in avoiding the making of any addition to the world's pain, and in trying to add to its happiness, one is warding off pain from, and gaining happiness for, oneself, as forming part of the world thus by such effort made more happy, less unhappy. But in the clear, true, view of the nature of the universe of life taught by the Buddha, all thought of a permanent, continuous self is utter error, and all calculation based upon such a thought, mistaken and false; and there is left the genuine follower of the Enlightened One naught to do but to strive evermore to banish such an erroneous notion from his mind, and to base all his activities of body, speech and mind upon the simple consideration of their effects in happiness or unhappiness for the being, of whatever nature it may be, that may come into existence as result of such activities.

It may be said—indeed it has been said—that thus to base morality upon a pure feeling of compassion for others' suffering, is to pitch its note too high for ordinary human ears to hear—that it is to invite men to live at a moral altitude where the air is pure and rarified beyond all capacity of common man to breathe and live.

Curiously enough, this objection to Buddhist morality as too exalted for ordinary human needs, comes most often from those who in their own persons not infrequently are striking instances to the contrary.

There is very little that is pleasant or attractive in the position of the western apostle of an alien faith in any Oriental country. He is an object of unceasing suspicion on the part of the natives of the country. All his actions—even those most obviously the outcome of simple goodwill—are interpreted as cunning wiles to seduce the innocent from allegiance to their own established faith. And if after long and weary labours in an exhausting and enervating climate, the missionary at last wins some of the sons of the soil to place themselves under his tuition, it is only to find with doleful frequency—a frequency the missionary hardly cares to speak about, even in his own intimate circle—that they have done so out of no feeling of admiration or respect for the teaching that is going to be presented to them, but solely on account of the prospect of material advantage which they believe will open before them in connection therewith. To those of his countrymen who may happen to be in the land as part of the machinery of its government or in order to acquire wealth for themselves by traffic in its resources, the missionary is to a large extent an object of thinly veiled amusement and even contempt. He is regarded as a fool or a fanatic for his efforts to spread the very religion which, nominally at least, is professed by the very men who so regard him. Except in a few rare cases, they do nothing voluntarily to help him in his work, and in many instances their general behaviour and mode of life are a direct and powerful hindrance in the way of his success. Now what induces such a man to undertake such a thankless task, looked down upon alike by those belonging to his religion and by those whom he seeks to induce to belong to it? It cannot be any monetary consideration, for many a missionary is a man of education who could command at least as high, if not higher, remuneration for the work he is able to do, amid far more congenial surroundings—namely, in his own native land. And such fame and honour as he may happen to receive in the very limited circles in his homeland, where labours such as his meet with approval, can hardly be looked upon as any adequate inducement to face a general discomfort of life often amounting to hardship, and to run an ever-present risk of falling into chronic ill-health and premature death. There is only one conclusion possible, and that is—passing over the inevitable exceptions—that the missionary undertakes the work he does out of a feeling of pity and compassion for his fellow man who lives in the "dark-places of the earth," as he believes. He believes that that fellow man is suffering for lack of something which he has it in his power to give him; and simply in order to be able to give it him, in order to relieve the suffering of that other, not of himself, he accounts but lightly the loss of worldly prospects, health, life itself.

Or let us turn to the case of men of an altogether different class. Say that an explosion has taken place in some fiery mine. Numbers of men are below at work when the catastrophe occurs, but a few are above at the pit-head. It is only with the greatest difficulty that these latter can be restrained from going down the mine at once, to try what they can do to rescue any who still may remain alive below, so little do they reck of the risk they themselves will run of perishing in the after-explosion that usually follows the first. They are quite well aware of this risk, but they are possessed by such intense fellow-feeling for their comrades' distressing position, that the prospect of wounds and death to themselves simply does not count with them. For pure compassion's sake, they are ready to face such deadly peril to life and limb, and to perform such deeds of heroism, as no consideration appealing to mere self-interest could ever induce man to face or perform.

Those who would have us believe that compassion, fellow-feeling, is no sufficient basis upon which to found a morality, have yet to study human-nature at its deepest—which is also its best. The noblest, bravest deeds that adorn the annals of our race, all the most difficult achievements of men, all doing that has demanded the most persistent and strenuous effort, all those actions that have called forth the loudest, most universal approval of mankind, have been performed, not for any personal reward, but for the sake of something, some idea, some ideal, some good, that had scarcely anything to do with self and its interests. True, such great, such selfless deeds are not done every day; neither do we meet at every street corner with men who have done them; but the mere fact that the hearing of such deeds sends a thrill of admiration through every human heart that is not quite dead, shows that the possibility of performing such deeds lies there too, in those approving hearts, ready to blossom out into actuality, into a similar deed, when comes the occasion fitted to call it forth. What exists as a potentiality, rightly regarded, already exists in actuality; and this forgetfulness of self, this carelessness for own welfare that springs from compassion or fellow-feeling for others, is really the only sure and certain foundation upon which to build a morality that is going to appeal to all rational men, at all times, in all places.

And this is what Buddhist morality is meant to do. It is meant to be the universal appeal and call to the right life such as no candid, open-minded person can honestly gainsay or resist, since it is an appeal based upon facts, and upon the unavoidable deductions that follow upon those facts. This it is first of all; and so far it is a statement of the rules and reasons of righteousness which requires nothing more than the exercise of common sense and rational judgment to commend itself to every reasonable man. After this, it is a statement of an important, nay, of an indispensable component of the means whereby may be obtained deliverance from the bondage of sentient existence. Here, truly, as in the nature of the case is inevitable, the Buddha's code of morality does not, as in its first use, bear its own demonstration in itself. But if it is not susceptible of immediate logical proof, on the other hand it is capable of being put to a practical proof that is quite as satisfactory in its outcome. For if, for the nonce, a man assumes that the Buddha speaks truly when He says that in so far as any one faithfully follows the course of behaviour He recommends, he thereby weakens his attachment to the sense of separate existence; and if, so assumimg, he actually does follow the course of action thus prescribed, he will find as he proceeds with his practice of the same that his attachment, his clinging to self-existence, is in fact being weakened. The recognition in deed that others are as he is himself—which is all that morality is at bottom—and that aught that would be to their detriment is as rigorously to be avoided as aught that would be to his own, gradually, as it is persisted in, brings about and furnishes the proof that such actually is the case, that others' weal is his weal, and others' woe his woe, and ultimately makes possible the supreme insight of all, that there is really no "his" and no "others'" weal and woe, but only one common weal and woe in which all share. Contrariwise, persistence in behaviour the opposite of Right Behaviour, action that ignores the hurt that may come to others as consequence thereof, makes this last highest insight impossible to the man who so behaves and acts. Life is not all logic. Life is also practice. And he who does not *act* in accordance with the theory—for the moment putting it as such—that his neighbour is himself, can never arrive at the full conviction that this is so, and therewith at emancipation final and complete from all the cares and anxieties for self that distress the life of all who have not won to full insight; in brief, he can never come to full and perfect deliverance from suffering. So far then, as that branch of Right Behaviour which is called Right Speech is concerned, when a man refrains from lying and slander and harsh words and frivolous chatter, and practises instead speech that is truthful and kindly and courteous and sensible, he is doing two things: he is helping to make himself and all who come in contact with him, happy here and now, and he is also making possible, and powerfully furthering, his speedy attainment of that state of mind in which he will perceive the true nature of all this show of things, and with that supreme perception find final deliverance from it all.

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CHAPTER IV

RIGHT ACTION

REGARDED from the point of view of a practical guide to conduct, the outstanding, most characteristic feature of the Buddha's teaching is its inculcation of harmlessness as the thing first to be aimed at in all men's activities of body, of speech, and of mind. Summed up in one word, the advice of the Buddha to His followers is that they should so act that from their action no harm shall follow to any living creature whatsoever throughout the entire gamut of existence. He enjoins men to an unreserved respect for the feelings and rights of everything that has life, setting up in this regard no distinction between themselves and so-called "lower" forms of life, but holding their own existence as only one (and not the most important at that) among many diverse manifestations of a great life that embodies itself indifferently in a worm and in an archangel. The brotherhood, not of man only, but of all that lives, is the effectual teaching of the Buddha, and the duty of each man correspondingly is to let his existence in the world be the cause of as little harm as possible to all other forms of life without an exception.

It is quite true that the effort to do this can never be perfectly successful in a world where the very condition of the continued existence of each form of life is that it should appropriate to itself for its own maintenance something that else would have gone to the support of some other creature. So far as in him lies, however, the follower of the Buddha has to reduce this quite inevitable infringement upon the potential well-being of other creatures to the narrowest possible limits. Hence the fourth member of the Noble Eightfold Path taken as a whole, and the second member of that division of it which deals with *Sīla* or morality, is an injunction to men to refrain from hurting other beings by the infliction of wounds or death, by despoiling them of their possessions, or by the ungranted gratification of lust upon them; with, as final injunction, the precept that requires abstinence from intoxicating liquors and stupefying drugs, whereby men are robbed of self-control and proper consciousness of what they do, and hence are liable, all unwitting, to do one or another—

or it may be all three—of the forms of hurt to fellow-creatures already enjoined against. *Sammā kammanta* or Right Action is the name given in Pāli to this division of the Path, and it is distinguished from Right Speech in that it deals with deeds done by the body instead of with those done through the tongue. Specifically, Right Action means to refrain from killing, stealing, adultery, and the partaking of intoxicants; and thus boldly stated, differs but little from the behaviour enjoined in some other religions and systems of morality; yet the particular meaning which each of these injunctions has in the teaching of the Buddha, makes it worth while to consider each separately.

The injunction to refrain from killing for instance, means much more than a requirement to refrain from taking the life of one's fellow man. It is an injunction to refrain from injuring or killing, as also from being the cause that others injure or kill, any living creature at all, from man downward to the lowliest insect that crawls at his feet. Such an injunction, so understood, will produce profound consequences in the life of any man who sets out to obey it. He will be the warm friend of every movement having for its object the protection of the animal creation from cruelty and wrong. In his own person he will never inflict suffering upon any dumb creature with which he has to do. He will never be a "sportsman" of the kind that admires only to slay. He will know how to love the beasts of the wild —and still let them live. He will spy upon their manner of life and take pleasure in ambushed observation of them—and they will go their ways unharmed by any deadly weapon of his.

Neither will he be the cause of others inflicting suffering or death upon any living thing, by making requirements involving such suffering and death. Neither for the nourishment nor for the adornment of his own body can any observer of the Buddha's injunction against killing make demands necessitating the injury or death of man or of bird or of beast. In a society where this injunction was obeyed, no tropies of furs or feathers from any slaughtered creature would be seen upon the person of human beings. In such a society, human beings would all be human—that is, humane beings—and no invidious distinctions would set a limit to the scope of their humanity. To wear on one's body the spoils of massacred creatures would be to stamp oneself a crude barbarian, a being from the outermost fringes of the cultivated world, lacking acquaintance with even the simplest elements of civilised life. The slaughter-house, that ghastly ensign of utter disregard for others' right to live, would also disappear from such a society, for none would care to nourish his own body with portions of the body of any murdered thing. And even though another's hand did the actual deed of killing, none for that would feel that his guilt was any the less. With men thus animated by a spirit of respect for the rights of other living beings besides those of their own species, we human beings would lose our present illrepute among the lower creatures for the cruellest, cunningest, most to be feared of all creatures; and following upon this happy change, who knows what new and beautiful relationships might not spring up between us and our humbler brothers of the dumb creation?

This attitude of sympathy for the lower creatures, however, by no means imports, as some have thought, a lessened regard for the rights of human life. If an observer of Right Action in this the first department of the same, would not injure or slay animal or bird on man's behalf, neither would he injure or slay or cause the death or injury of man, in favour of any of the "lower" creatures. Here, as elsewhere, the

Buddhist view avoids the falseness of extremes. According to the first precept of Right Action, all life is sacred, that of the insect no less than that of the man—but that of the man no less than that of the insect. No Buddhist could be guilty of the absurdity of denying food to men in order that he might give it to beasts. The supreme sanity that is the constant characteristic of the Middle Path saves him from all such error.

The second precept of Right Action is directed against stealing. In the literal meaning of the Pāli phrasing, it is a prescription against taking things that have not been given, an injunction that is intended to cover every possible method whereby one individual might obtain possession of the goods of another individual without that other's full and free consent. It is thus a requisition to shun the hurting of another in that part of himself which is his possessions, as the first precept of Right Action, among other things, is a requisition to do no hurt to one's neighbour in that part of himself which is his private person.

Hurt may be done to another in his possessions in quite a variety of ways. It may be done by the sly stealth of the hidden thief, or by the compelling violence of the open robber. It may be done by fraud and deceit in trafficking, or by the hazard of games of chance. Each of these is a means of obtaining possession of goods or its token, without the unconstrained consent of the owner, and so is a breach of the second precept of Right Action. Where this precept was fully observed, uprightness and honesty in business would be the general rule among all classes of merchants. Man would be able to deal with man with unreserved confidence, and the mutual esteem and respect that come of unreserved confidence. None would seek to secure his own gain by compassing the loss of another in any underhand, hidden way. Gambling of all kinds would also be unknown, as well in its more dissembled as in its more obvious forms, as well in the shape of speculation upon a rise or fall in the price of commodities, as in the form of a wager upon the fortune of a turned-up card or the halting-place of a whirling wheel. The wild feelings and passions such hazards arouse in men would all be absent, and absent also would be the many deeds of wrong to others, and of despair for oneself, that only too often follow thereupon—to the no small gain of the whole community. The bread of others would not be played with and withheld from them, only that one's own coffers might be stored with gold. And no ruined gamester would pass to shame or to a dishonoured grave because he had let go his all to fill with unearned gains the pocket-book of a fellow.

The third of the Buddha's precepts of Right Action is an injunction against doing sexual wrong to fellow beings. This is a requisition to refrain from secretly leading astray another's wife, young girls under the care of guardians, or brides betrothed to another. It is a prohibition of the gratification of sexual appetite by force or violence at the expense of any of the opposite sex, as it is also a prohibition of such gratification in every unnatural way, by "crimes against nature ".

This injunction against wrong gratification of sexual appetite is in effect a recognition that the *raison d'être* of that appetite is simply and solely the continuation of the species, and the one justification for its indulgence, the production of a new being. It is, in fact, a recognition of the rightness of the marriage state. The fact that the "homeless one," the follower of the Buddha in the particular mode of life lived by Him after He had attained enlightenment, makes promise to refrain entirely from the sexual act, is no contradiction of this. All are not prepared to follow closely in the footsteps of the Blessed One. All have not attained to such convincing vision of the truth of His Teaching regarding the impermanency, the unsatisfactoriness of all sentient existence, as to feel the urgent necessity of taking such steps, adopting such a manner of life, as will bring them such existence to the speediest possible end. And so long as this is so, so long as any feel no such necessity, there is nothing in the least reprehensible in their gratifying the sexual, like every other natural, appetite provided only they do so in a way that involves no harm or hurt to another in feelings or in person, provided thereby they do no wrong to any being, living or yet to appear among the living, as consequence of their deed. But for the man all of whose ways of thinking are permeated with the Teaching of the Buddha, as the cloth is stained with the dye in the dyer's vat, the sexual act is one he feels he must renounce, for it is for him an affirmation of the very contrary of that Teaching. It is the very acme of the affirmation of the will to live in its most intense form, instead of that affirmation of the will to be delivered from life, which lies at the root of all the Buddha's words to men.

The final precept of Right Action is an injunction to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors. So far the Buddha's prescriptions as to what constitutes righteous behaviour differ but little from those of every other teacher of men who makes pretension to inculcate a code of right conduct; but at this point the Buddha makes a decidedly laudable departure from many of them, including that taught by the founder of Christianity.

It is undoubtedly well to enjoin men to abstain from actions so hurtful to themselves and all connected with them, as are killing and stealing and lascivious lawlessness; but there is a very serious defect, a defect indeed whereof the importance can scarcely be exaggerated, in any system claiming to instruct men how to direct their lives aright, which omits to tell them totally to abstain from a liquor so potent to produce shipwreck of mind and understanding as is alcohol; since, through the simple partaking of this noxious drink, men, otherwise kind and honest and self-restrained, become liable to break every precept of right conduct upon the slightest provocation—or upon none. Such a lamentable omission as this is not to be found in the ethical code enunciated by the Buddha. The Awakened One recognised—as who can help recognising who has eyes to see? —that in a drink possessed of such baneful power to darken and confuse all human faculty of apprehension and comprehension as alcohol, there lay an enemy to all righteous ways of life against which His followers must be put on their guard as against some devouring flame that would burn up in them all right action, indeed, all possibility of right action.

For ultimately Right Action is of the mind rather than of the external act. Some have even said that Right Action is all of the mind and not of the body at all. But this is going too far. Even to follow a course of right action with but little accompanying understanding of why such action is followed, will produce its own effect as physical action, as a bodily deed; and the doer, perceiving that effect, however unreflecting he may be, must come at length to catch a glimpse of the reason why his action is called right; he will come to see that its results are beneficial for himself and for his neighbours. But the specially baneful thing about alcohol is, that whenever it is taken into the body even in the smallest quanity, to an extent exactly corresponding to the amount taken, the understanding is clouded; and even though the action performed may happen to be a right action, it is performed without the full degree of understanding that ought to have accompanied it, and so is much less effective for good than it otherwise would have been. For the chief good that follows upon right action of every kind is not merely the immediate or remoter pleasant result in the shape of circumstances conducive to comfort or happiness. The chief good that follows upon righteous behaviour lies rather in the increased degree of right understanding which it makes possible to every one who observes it. But in order that this good may be secured, it is necessary that the deed done should be accompanied by a clear consciousness of its being done, on the part of the doer. To whatever extent this clear consciousness is absent, to that extent the result in added power of Right Understanding will also be wanting. In the man who has taken alcohol into his system in any quantity however small, this clear consciousness of what is being done when it is being done (called in Pāli, *Sati*), is clouded over in corresponding degree, and so he misses a proportionate measure of the good that ought to have come to him from his action in the shape of an increased access of Right Understanding; while, to the man whose brain is completely soaked in the fumes of alcoholic liquor, there is no clear comprehension of what is done present at all, and so no increase whatever can come to him as result of his action—if indeed in his senseless condition, he is so fortunate as not to commit deeds the very opposite of right.

Sammā kammanta, then, Right Action, in the Teaching of the Buddha, consists in the shunning of killing and stealing and lasciviousness and drunkenness, in every degree, and under every form. And the final ground for obeying its injunctions is ever and always only this—that thereby men make possible for themselves a right understanding of their own nature and of the nature of the world in which they find themselves, in ever greater and greater measure as they continue to obey them. *As they continue to obey them*, be it repeated; for Right Action has not merely to be talked about; it has also to be performed. It is in the *practice* of right action that all its value lies; it has no other value. Some mysterious virtue seems to reside in the doing of a deed which is not to be obtained in any other way than by doing it. One may discuss ethical precepts and rules of conduct as much as one pleases, but no amount of such discussion will bring a man a whit more near to real Right Understanding than he was before he began to talk. But only let him begin to *do* what hitherto he has only talked about, and he is on the way to real and certain knowledge of himself and of life. Simply to do the good deed has a wonderful property of opening up some channel of understanding within, which reveals to us the meaning of many things in a way that cogitation and consideration alone, however profound and sustained, can never do.

This is rather a disconcerting fact to those who would have everything in man's life proceed upon the lines of strict logical reasoning—and yet it *is* a fact. Life laughs at logic every day. It would seem that logic—so far as it is able to serve at all—is meant to be life's servant, never once to be its master. It seems designed for the under, not for the upper, place; and to be dismissed, superseded, when anything else more useful offers itself in its place. Such an "anything else" is to be found in a species of understanding that seems to be beyond the understanding of the brain. It does not, of course, necessarily contradict brain understanding—by this latter term being meant that understanding which depends upon the carrying out of logical processes of reasoning—but it seems to have an existence to some extent independent of and apart from it.

Examples of such understanding will readily occur to anyone who has had experience of the practical affairs of life. It is, for instance, no infrequent experience in the life of the laboratory worker, that laboriously studying the information given in a book as to the construction of some little piece of needed apparatus and thoroughly understanding all that the book has to say on the subject, he yet finds himself, after every effort, unable to construct the said piece of apparatus properly, and is obliged to call in the aid of some common mechanic who knows little of what is written in the book, but setting his hands to the needed work, carries out successfully what the theoretically instructed man had tried in vain to do, and with a perfection of neatness in the finished result altogether beyond the latter's powers. Here the mere practice of the hands in the routine of the workshop, confers on the mechanic, so far as the work to be done is concerned, an understanding far superior to that of the man learned only in the kind of understanding that books are able to convey. It may be said that the understanding displayed by the workshop mechanic stands on a lower plane, is of an inferior order to that possessed by the scientist of the laboratory; it may be maintained that it is merely an understanding of the hands as compared with that of the head, and so from a general standpoint is a lower kind of understanding. This may be admitted; but the point is, that it is a different kind of understanding from brain-understanding and yet, for the work to which it is applied, an indubitably superior one.

The existence of a similarly superior variety of understanding, only applied to life as a whole instead of to one of its petty details, is the fundamental postulate underlying all Buddhist practice of Right Action. The unfortunate thing from some points of view—from that of the devotee of mental concepts, among others—is that this kind of understanding seems to defy all exact definition or description. In the case instanced of the workshop-trained mechanic we might, at a hazard, define the understanding there displayed as an understanding resident in the nerve-centres of the hands and arms and eyes of the mechanic as apart from his brain; but it is difficult to find a fitting designation for the kind of understanding that comes to the man who makes of the world itself his workshop and in the common life of the world finds the means he requires to train himself up to it in the constant practice of Right Action. This kind of understanding absolutely refuses to be formulated in any terms comprehensible to reason and logic. Not a product of reason, it cannot ever be made wholly clear to reason. We may seek to give it a name, and call it super-thought, super-intellection, super-anything we like; but however unsatisfatory and lacking in definite content all such names may be, the thing they are intended to indicate remains a fact. Impossible of clear definition, this understanding is yet not impossible to obtain, for little by little, in a degree exactly corresponding with the faithfulness of his practice, it becomes the assured possession of the man who, with ever-present clear consciousness of all that he does, practises himself in the practice of Right Action. The absence of a clean-cut logical demonstration of its nature matters little, " for nothing worthy proving can be proven—nor yet disproven "—that is, so far as logical proofs are concerned. As for the practical proof, the opportunity to obtain this is open to all. By each man, for himself, it is to be obtained through the faithful continued practice of *Sammā kammanta*, Right Action.

CHAPTER V

RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

To the vast majority of householders the world over, of any religion or of none, the prosaic business of earning a livelihood is perforce the most prominent business of their lives. Other pursuits they may have, but these take only second place to this; they are to be attended to only in what time may be to spare from this, the main pursuit. It might indeed quite plausibly be maintained that men's material achievements are all due to nothing else but the pressure put upon them by this all-important task of meeting material needs, in a world where the means to meet them do not fall into the hands from the skies. Day by day, man has to go forth to office and workshop, field and forest and mine, or out upon river and sea, for the one purpose of finding there what will meet the material necessities of self and wife and children, and in this search has made nearly all the progress he has achieved in the conquest of the world of matter and force about him.

In the legitimate occupation of earning a livelihood thus thrust upon him, how shall the householder know how to direct his activity aright? As a man living the ordinary life of the world, he cannot but hold himself to "the *shall* and *shalt not* of the lower morality," as a certain Sutta calls it. He still must be subject to the prescriptions of that morality, still must conform his conduct to its requirements. What then are the requirements of that morality in this domain? What are the injunctions of the Buddha as to the right way in which a follower of His may earn his livelihood?

As we might expect, the Buddha's injunctions to His followers as to the right means of earning a livelihood can be summed up in this one prescription: that they should earn their living only in such ways as do not involve injury or death to any living being, without distinction made between human and non-human being.

This prescription contains the essence and spirit of Buddhist Right Livelihood, but going more into detail, it is forbidden to the follower of the Buddha to earn his living by the trade of killing his fellow-man in what is called war; he is forbidden to follow the profession of soldier.

Such a prohibition naturally follows from the first precept of Right Action which is an injunction against every form of taking life, without any exception. There is no possibility of shuffling or evasion with regard to this precept at least as set forth by the Buddha. By no art or subterfuge is it possible to get the countenance of the Buddha's word for the act of maiming and slaughtering human beings. The fact that in war a man kills to order, and not for the gratification of any personal grudge or hate, does not affect this prohibition in the least. Killing remains killing, no matter how or under what circumstances it is done. The soldier's profession, stripped of all the dazzling trappings, material and mental, with which men are wont to drape it, is one of killing, and so utterly and entirely condemnable, beyond any appeal. And though Buddhists may be, and at times indeed have been, so far forgetful of their Teacher's injunctions in this regard as to take up arms for the slaughter of fellow-men, they could not be, and never have been, so deficient in all sense of the fitness of things as to invoke the approval of that Teacher for their deeds of blood.

By the rule of Right Livelihood it is also forbidden the follower of the Buddha to earn his living by the manufacture and sale of lethal weapons, or by anything that has to do with their manufacture and sale. By dealing in implements of hurt and death, even though he himself may not use them, a man becomes an accessory in the deeds of those who do, and incurs a due share of responsibility for the evil consequences that follow upon such deeds. To be sure, such responsibility is not so great as that of the man who actually does the deed of killing. But the maker of instruments expressly designed for the taking of the life, the dealer in swords and bayonets, bombshells and cannon, cannot be absolved of his share in the evil results of the uses to which such things are put. It is the same with the maker of poisons and the dealer in them. These—more especially in the East—are an oft-used means of procuring the death of beings, where the would-be murderer, for whatever reason, shrinks from the open method of bullet or dagger. Whoever, by providing such means of compassing the death of living beings, makes possible their death by these means, to that extent is participator in the death-bringing deed. Hence, under the rule of Right Livelihood, all dealing in poisons is forbidden the follower of the Buddha.

The rule of Right Livelihood also forbids the Buddhist to take any part in the flesh of slaughtered animals. No Buddhist can be a slaughterer in a slaughter-house, nor keep any kind of establishment for the sale of portions of the carcases of slaughtered animals. Neither can he be a hunter, with death-dealing weapons or by means of snares or pits or nets compassing the death of living creatures. Here, again, killing remains just killing, the nature of the creature killed, making no difference whatever. Such a manner of earning a living is only for those who have never heard, or hearing give no heed to, the Buddha's Teaching of mercy and loving-kindness toward all that lives; it is not for those who have heard and fain would heed that Teaching. And those who supply the means by which living creatures of the brute creation are brought to death, are sharers in the guilt of their death. The making of springs, snares, rifles, and so forth, designed for the capture or death of any wild thing, is classed as a wrong way of earning a livelihood, and so forbidden the follower of the Lord of Compassion. Equally the Buddhist may not make his living by the capture or sale of the denizens of the watery element. The right of these creatures to live is the same as that of the creatures of forest and field, and the craft of the fisherman, therefore, is equally prohibited along with that of the hunter, as a wrong and not a right way of earning a livelihood. It is likewise a wrong way of earning a living to do so by supplying, or having anything to do with supplying, the fisherman with the nets or hooks he requires in the pursuit of his death-dealing occupation. To provide or help to provide him with these is, by so much, to be a partaker in the forbidden work in which they are employed.

By the rule of Right Livelihood, it is also forbidden to earn one's living by the capture and imprisonment of bird or beast or any living thing at all. To the wild, free creatures of air and earth, liberty is well-nigh the same thing as life. To deprive them of their liberty is to subject them to a pain and suffering which is not the less but rather the more, for the fact that it is spun out through many long and weary years. The caged lark vainly beating its little brown breast against the wires of its narrow prison, the restless lion wretchedly pacing back and forth behind the iron bars that stand between it and sweet liberty, in their silent misery are a standing, endlessly clamant accusation of those who have brought them into their cruel bondage. These creatures too, as well as man, have the right to a happy and unfettered existence; hence no true follower of the Buddha can support his own life at the cost of the constant suffering and misery of even the least of them. He can have nothing to do with traffic in imprisoned bird or beast.

Still less may the follower of the Buddha earn his living by any form of trading or trafficking in human beings, whether male or female. He may not deal in male slaves, depriving human being of their personal liberty, and disposing of their persons or labour for his own private profit and advantage without any regard to their will or desire. Such a wrong against living beings is only second in seriousness to that of taking their life. Neither may a Buddhist be a dealer in female slaves nor engage in any of the kinds of traffic which usually accompany such dealing, or follow in its train. He may not be a pander or procurer or brothel-keeper, or assist in any degree or capacity in any such business.

The rule of Right Livelihood which requires the householder to earn his living in ways involving no hurt to others, also forbids him to engage in the manufacture or sale, or in any business connected with the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquor.

The one most characteristic thing about man is his mind. It is his possession of mind that makes man to be man, and gives him his preeminence over other beings that do not possess it in such superlative degree. Whatever hurts man in his mind, consequently, hurts him in that which is most intimately himself. And this is precisely what intoxicating liquor does, and does so effectively that while under its influence, a man for the time being is not a man, but something from which the manlike quality of right reason has been expelled, and only a very inferior kind of brute left in its place. To earn one's living as an agent, however remote and indirect, in providing men with the means whereby they are able to work themselves such woeful hurt as this, is to earn one's living in a way that is indisputably wrong.

What has been said about intoxicating liquor, applies with equal force to narcotic and stimulating drugs—to any kind of drug that interferes with, or falsifies, the normal action of the brain or nervous system. Under this heading come opium, hashish, cocaine and all drugs of like or allied nature. These, ultimately are no less harmful in their action on the mind than are intoxicating liquors. Hence, every kind of traffic in them also is strictly forbidden the man who would wish to earn his living only in ways that are right.

To sum up all in one phrase: it is required of the Buddhist householder that he shall earn his living only in such ways as will entail no evil—that is to say, no pain-producing consequences to anyone—to himself or to others. He is to earn his living only by work that does nothing to promote or increase, in oneself or others, such "unskilful" actions as killing, stealing, lustful violence or inducement, or indulgence in intoxicating drinks or stupefying drugs. Whoever while engaging in the necessary and legitimate business of earning his living in the everyday work of the world, carefully avoids doing anything that could in any way make for such "unskilful" actions—he is fulfilling the prescriptions of that member of the Noble Eightfold Path which is called Right Livelihood.

It need scarcely be said that wherever men in any large numbers follow such rules of life as are here laid down under the name of Right Livelihood, there will arise among them a form of Community or State differing very considerably from most Communities and States in existence to-day, at least in Western countries. The difference, indeed, is likely to be so great as actually to necessitate the disappearance of much that seems to us essential to the very existence of a State, and the arising in its place of modes of life and manners constituting in their entirety the coming to be of a State of another order altogether.

All our modern European States, or nearly all of them, exist in a condition of watchful, apprehensive jealousy, one of the other, where their attitude is not, indeed, one of direct, even if unexpressed, antagonism. Even when one State, for the moment, happens to look upon some other of its sister States as more or less its friend, it yet does so with a keen eye always to the possibility of that State one day becoming its enemy; and does not fail in secret to take measures accordingly. Nearly all States the world over, in fact, reproduce and perpetuate to-day a condition of things which in the old, unhappy, far-off times was the universally prevailing condition between individuals. As in those days every man's hand was against his fellow man's, each being continually on the alert to take from that fellow man something belonging to him, killing him, if necessary, as part of the undertaking, and complementary-wise, being always on the watch to prevent that fellow man from taking from him something that belonged to himself, being again prepared to kill in that work of prevention; so, to-day, those bodies of men, called nations, perpetually watch one another for the opportunity to steal from each other or to prevent others from stealing from them, and in order to do this most effectually, keep in constant readiness large numbers of the members of their several communities specially trained and equipped for this work, to that end being provided with death-dealing weapons of the most destructive kind, and educated to make the most effective use of the same.

Now it is obvious that if, in any of these States, the particular members who have been selected to form the force whereby the theft of the property of other nations is meant to be effected, were all with one accord to refuse to perform any such service, as being a wrong and not a right way of earning a livelihood, it would entail most important consequences to the State to which they belonged. Such a State, for instance, would not only no longer be in a position to rob other States of their possessions, but—much more serious consequence—would no longer be able to defend itself from being robbed of its own possessions by any neighbouring State bent upon such robbery, and possessed of the full force needed to carry it out. If, however, all States were in a similar predicament, if no State anywhere within its borders could find those willing to engage in the work—to call it work!—of plundering other peoples, or of protecting those who did the actual plundering, but, contrariwise, found all its citizens actually opposed to such a breach of Right Action on the part of the collective body to which they belonged, that moment a new era would begin for all peoples and States. It would be as superior in its advantages over those eras of national suspicion and hatred that hitherto have darkened the history of the world, as our present era of ordered and regulated conduct between the different individuals within the bounds of a State, is superior to the old days of individual lawlessness when every man took who had the power to take, and those only kept who could. And this step forward in the history of man, this happy change from savagery to civilisation in the attitude of nations towards one another, would take place, would be *bound* to take place, through the simple acceptance on the part of all men of that element of Buddhist Right Livelihood, which means refusal to earn one's livelihood by the trade of killing one's fellow men of another nation under the guise of "soldier".

In some quarters the fear is frequently expressed that this change may not be as entirely beneficent as on the surface it would appear to be. It is asked: Will not such a change as this bring about the certain degeneration of the peoples among whom it takes place? Will not the disappearance of the soldier, the man who takes his life in his hand for the sake of the fatherland, import the eventual loss of a nation's vigour and valour and its ultimate lapse into weakness and effeminacy?

The mere fact that such a question should be possible, is only one more melancholy evidence of the extent to which old habit has power to blind men's eyes to simple reason and common sense. It is supposed that men, after all these milleniums of evolution, are still such creatures that the work which can most fitly show forth their characteristic qualities and give them the most favourable opportunity of development, is the work of dealing out destruction and death. The contention would seem to be that, even in these late days, the nature of man is still so akin to that of the wolf and the tiger, that he can only develop his powers, and maintain them in fullest efficiency, by activities allied to those of beasts of prey. But it is scarcely possible to take such a contention seriously. It were too black a libel on the human race even to hint at taking it seriously. The powers and qualities of man are far other than those of wolf and tiger, and to be developed in far other ways than the ways of slaughter and rapine.

Even though men did abandon for ever the trade of killing their fellow-men in war, they need not therefore lose all manly virtue, all power to face disaster and death with courage and fortitude. Whatever noble qualities formerly may have found expression in the profitless work of *taking* life might much more sensibly and rationally be exercised in the work of *saving* it. "We admire the soldier," one has said, "not because he goes out to kill, but to be killed." Quite true: but he would be equally as worthy of our admiration did he go out to die in saving life instead of in destroying it. Is not that man more, and not less, worthy of our praise and plaudits who faces death in the attempt to save endangered lives in burning building or on sinking ship, than he who confronts the prospect of wounds and death in the ghastly, insane work of trying to inflict wounds and death on fellow-men? Every particle of the bravery and heroism that has hitherto found its field of exercise on battlefields in senseless war *with man himself*, would find as ample a field for its exercise and development, one immeasurably saner and nobler, in a war *with* *the enemies of mankind*, fire and flood and other kindred dangers.

If there is any danger that through the abandonment of the soldier's trade, the youth of a nation, hitherto trained in that form of discipline, may lose their virility and manliness, there is nothing to prevent their being drafted into Fire Brigades, Lifeboat Crews, and Mine Life-rescue Corps, under the same rules and regulations that now attach to military service. In these life-saving services they would find ample opportunity for the display and further development of every manly quality they may possess, and find it in a work far more befitting their status as human beings. Such is one way at least, in which a nation's youth might be trained in disciplined self-sacrifice and manly virtue, without having to resort to the more than questionable training of the man killing trade. Such would be the way that at once would commend itself as the only rational way in a country where the Buddha's teaching as to Right Livelihood was unquestioningly heeded and acted upon. In such a country the life-*saving* corps, on land or sea or in the bowels of the earth, quite simply and naturally would take the place of our present life-*taking* corps, and provide the youth of the community with a training and discipline no whit less sound and valuable than that afforded by the latter, and one beyond all comparison more worthy of men possessed of brains to think and hearts to feel. And so war and all the waste and wickedness of it might be banished for ever without the least cause for regret at its final disappearance from the scene of human life.

But not less potent to bring to an end the anomaly and anachronism of war than the refusal of all men to engage in the work of killing on any pretext, would be their absolute refusal to have anything to do with the manufacture or sale of arms or any of the other munitions of war, for nothing is more certain than that men could not take one another's lives wholesale did they not possess the instruments wherewith to do it. Again, the acceptance in practice of this rule of Right Livelihood by large numbers of men in any western country to-day would necessarily involve a considerable change in the internal economy of that country; but it can safely be said that it would be a change that would ultimately be all for the better and never once for the worse.

Owing to the present prevailing belief that it is necessary always to be prepared to hurt and kill the men of another nationality than one's own, a serious proportion of the earnings of the men of each country is taken from them in order to pay for the preparations needed for this work of hurting and killing. The money so taken is poured, as it were, into a closed channel, and goes no further to carry on the fertilising work which, as the material blood of community life, money ought to perform, as it circulates through the body politic. The huge sums spent on armaments and implements of war bring no real return, but thereby are blocked of all further utility, buried as they are in huge structures of steel whose only purpose is to serve as instruments of destruction, and whose only likely end is, some day, to sink all their costly bulk out of sight for ever in fathoms of salt water.

Again there is no real ground for fearing any permanently untoward result, were all this vast and profitless expenditure brought to an immediate end. To be sure, those, at present employed in the construction of all the varied enginery of war, by such a change would find themselves thrown out of employment until such time as they could find other work for their hands. But the sums saved by ceasing to manufacture war materials would not disappear into nothing; they would only become available for use in other and infinitely more profitable ways, and in these new channels of expenditure would again provide work whereby those in need might earn their daily bread. The millions of pounds now expended on preparations for war and allied ends, might be expended in dozens of ways, any one of them more profitable and beneficial to the State than the present use that is made of them.

There is nothing, for instance, that so well indicates the progress of a community as the state of its communications, of its roads whether of earth or steel—its highways and its railways. The difference between a civilised and uncivilised community is very largely just the difference between cheap, easy, and abundant means of communication, and dear, difficult, and scanty means to that end. Here, in the improvement of its roads, the money now wasted on war-ships and monstrous cannon by many a nation, could be spent in a way that, instead of being a dead loss of wealth to the community, would call into existence what would speedily prove a source of new wealth to it. Two million pounds spent on roads would give employment to idle hands equally as well as two million pounds spent on a warship or a park of new and deadly artillery, and the thing created would remain in existence as a work of permanent utility to the community as a whole.

Another reliable measure of a community's progress is to be found in the level of knowledge attained to by the average of its members. This is a matter that could be attended to, and considerably improved, by almost any nation in Europe at the present day without the addition of a single penny to the expenditure of its public money. It would only need that the money annualy spent on the building of new warships and the furnishing of fresh battalions should be spent instead in the building of new schools, and in providing improved means of instruction for the mass of the people. In training the brains of its youthful members to greater efficiency and their hands to greater skill, the community in no long time would bring about such an increase in its general well-being as could never possibly be reached by its being able to say that this year it owned so many more engines of destruction than it did last year.

But there are scarcely any limits to the number of ways in which a community could spend its wealth more sensibly, rationally, and profitably than on the means of doing hurt to a neighbouring community. The adoption of any of such improved ways of using its wealth, far from connoting the decay of State life, would rather import its strengthening and consolidation, for nothing binds men together in a corporate body so much as the enjoyment of a common weal secured and maintained by the common exertions of all. No State can rightly claim to be civilised which year after year goes on expending a large proportion of its members' time and means in channels that bring it absolutely no profit—upon machinery of pure destruction, not of construction. A State more truly civilised than any at present existing would come into being the moment all its members adopted that constituent of Buddhist Right Livelihood which is abstention from all share either in the use or the production of implements for the destruction of human life.

And there is another rule of Right Livelihood which, adhered to by all the members of any community, would work an equally extensive and beneficent change in that community, imparting to it a salutary and powerful impulse in the direction of progress and prosperity. Were all the citizens of any State rigorously to withhold from having anything to do with the manufacture or sale of intoxicating drinks, what a welcome revolution would be produced in their country by the observance of this one alone of the rules of Right Livelihood! Every year in every country of the West, thousands of unhappy wretches commit offences of every kind against the common-weal—offences they would never have thought of committing but for the enemy that, put into their mouths, stole away their brains and bereft them of all power of right reason. To arrest these victims of the demoralising power of alcohol, every year large sums are paid in salaries to hosts of policemen. To appraise their guilt rightly and award the punishment due, other large sums have to be paid in salaries to judges. Thousands of pounds more are wanted to pay the warders and jailers who keep watch over the imprisoned victim of alcohol while he expiates his offence. And thousands more are needed for the erection of new buildings in which to confine the ever-increasing army of misdemeanants. This utterly unremunerative expenditure would all be saved in a community whose members universally refused to earn their living in any way that had to do with the manufacture or sale of alcohol. For, while it is true that if men desperately want alcoholic liquors, they will get them one way or another; it is also true that where the opportunities to obtain such liquors are few, there is considerably less consumption of the same—consequently less of the results that follow upon such consumption.

It is well known that hospitals, asylums, and homes for the care of all sorts of hereditary inefficients and incapables, are largely filled with the degenerate descendants of the man who has poisoned his system with alcohol. The host of paralytics, epileptics, idiots, and insane, who at present have to be taken care of by the community, in a very few generations would be considerably less in number in a community where alcoholic liquor was unobtainable; and the sums now spent on their upkeep—another absolutely unremunerative expenditure—would be set free for other and more profitable uses. And the poor drunkard himself, from being the burden he now is upon the community so unfortunate as to own him for one of its members, would become instead a valuable contributor to its material well-being. The amount of ability, talent, and even genius, to-day drowned in the wine-cup and the brandy-glass, and lost to every community where indulgence in alcoholic liquor is prevalent, is incalculable, and not any the less serious because we have no available means of gauging its exact amount; for it is precisely upon the finest and most delicately adjusted brains that alcohol produces its most damaging effects. All this human excellence and what it might work for the well-being of the community, would be saved and made profitable as soon as the community made up its mind to banish intoxicants completely from its midst.

Right Livelihood is thus seen to make fitting conclusion to the trio of the members of the Noble Eightfold Path which applies more especially to the householder and his conduct in life. It rounds off and makes complete the set of injunctions, following which faithfully, the man of the home will be living the sane, the wholesome, the right life, profitable to himself and to all he has to do with, profitable to the family dependent upon him, and profitable to the State that is fortunate enough to number him among its citizens. Wherever in speech, men are truthful and kindly and courteous; in action, refrain from killing, and thieving,and lustful lawlessness, and the partaking of intoxicating liquors or stupefying drugs; and crown this practice of right behaviour by the practice of Right Livelihood, by refusing to earn their living in any way that conceivably could work harm to any living being—there individual, family and State, all alike will find themselves established upon that best and surest of foundations, the foundation namely of peace and justice for all alive, the foundation of a truly civilised life, a genuine civilisation, what alone is truly worthy the name of civilisation.

CHAPTER VI

RIGHT ENDEAVOUR

MARK TWAIN somewhere tells the story of a wretched prisoner who through many long and weary years languished on the floor of a dark and dismal dungeon. At last, one day—so the narrator says—happy thought occurred to the man. He got up, went to the door, opened it, and walked out!

The tale is told as a jest, but if instead of merely wishing to make his reader laugh, the intention of the famous American humorist had been to present to him in the fewest possible words a picture of the entire theory and practice of the religion called Buddhism, he could hardly have succeeded better though he had pondered the matter for months. For the essence of Buddhism, divested of all incidental—and perhaps in some ways inevitable—elaborations, can really be stated in terms as simple and plain as this.

Man is a prisoner in a dungeon—the dungeon of the world; there can be no real freedom for him or for any creature that has its existence within the circle of causation. The laws that govern the changes taking place in a world are the rock walls that hem him round. In the dungeon in which he is thus immured, it is very dark, so dark that scarce anything at all can rightly be seen by its inmates. Indeed some of these cannot even see enough to distinguish that they are in a prison. Others again, still worse off, utterly blind with too long living in the darkness, very much doubt if any such strange thing, as light is said to be, can even exist at all! For the instrument, the mind, through which the light—what little light is available—comes to these dungeon dwellers, is by no means a perfect instrument for the purpose. It lets through only a little light, just enough to show to those with sight that there is such a thing as darkness! Thus defective in its nature, and such understanding as it is capable of yielding even when put to its best and most skilful use, tainted with defect, that understanding hardly deserves to be called understanding so much as misunderstanding dimly perceived as such, when the instrument happens to be working a little better than usual.

The case of the prisoner would thus at first sight seem to be a very hopeless one indeed.

And yet, far from that being the case, it is full of assurance of the most joyous kind. For there is in man a thing called will. When the appropriate motives are presented, that will can be awaked and set in motion. With the coming of just enough light to see in what direction to guide the motions of that will, man may so guide them that they shall lead him to liberty. Situated as he is, man is yet not without the power to rise to his feet in the darkness of his dungeon, half see, half grope his way to the exit, open the door, and walk forth out of his captive darkness into the broad light of open day and liberty. There is a sure and certain way whereby he may brighten and polish and make more effective for its purpose the instrument through which he obtains understanding; and obtaining that understanding, he may in the same act find deliverance from the bondage of the limitations of sentient existence. Though man is bound, yet he may be free; and at any and every moment may begin to take the first steps that will ultimately bring him to freedom.

It is possible to train the mind in whatever direction one chooses—this is the broad central fact forming the foundation on which the whole of the Buddha's practical teaching is based. It is mind that makes us to be prisoners in the house of Life, and it is mind that keeps us so. But what mind has done, that mind can undo. If it has brought us thraldom, it can also, when rightly directed, bring us liberty. And Buddhism makes no secret of the matter that it has brought us thraldom. Some, indeed, say that it affirms man's thraldom just a trifle more loudly than is at all comfortable or necessary, and on the fact of this its affirmation, base a charge that it is a teaching of unmitigated gloom, altogether too lugubrious of tone to be of much use to the generality of mankind. They would prefer what they consider a more decent reticence on the unpalatable subject.

But if Buddhism does proclaim, with what seems to many quite unnecessary insistence, the disagreeable nature of existence in a prison-house, it proceeds to make with equal insistency the startling assertion that the prisoners need not stay in the prison a moment longer than they choose. Or, to be strictly accurate, it says that at any moment they can set themselves to the work necessary to their deliverance from it; that on the completion of this work they will be free with none to hinder them; and that the hour when this work is complete entirely depends upon themselves—that is to say, upon the amount of application and energy they put into the work. Each man's deliverance, so the Buddha declares, lies absolutely and entirely in his own hands; it lies in the hands of none else whatsoever, neither men nor gods nor "God". The prisoner has no need to supplicate any one to lift him and carry him to the door. Indeed, no one else, not even a Perfect Buddha, can do so for him. He must himself by his own resolute efforts rise and make his way to the portals that give upon liberty, and it is always, at every moment, in his power so to do. Neither are those portals locked and the key in possession of some one else from whom it must be obtained by prayer and entreaty. That door is free of all bolts and bars save those the man himself has made. It only needs to be undone and opened by each man for himself, when at once he may pass forth into freedom from all sorrows, all miseries, all distresses for evermore. Man's only gaoler is himself.

The endeavour thus to gain the door that leads out of his painful prison-house, to swing it open and win to liberty, is called Right or Perfect Endeavour, in order of mention the sixth member of the Noble Eightfold Path; and in essence this endeavour is endeavour or effort aiming at the mastery and control of that mind which is the cause of our bondage, and which, therefore, through rightly directed exertion, may be made to yield us, instead of slavery, freedom.

This Right Endeavour at the culture and control of the mind, in Buddhist writings, is generally divided into four main classes: First, Endeavour to prevent bondage-making states of mind from arising; second, Endeavour to suppress whatever bondage-making states of mind may already have arisen; third, Endeavour to bring into existence freedom-tending states of mind; and fourth, Endeavour to promote the further growth and increase of such freedom-tending states of mind as already may be in existence. And this Endeavour may be pursued in various different ways.

It is a commonplace in psychology that thoughts of any kind, whether of the variety called "good" or of the kind called "bad," are given firmer root in the mind in exact proportion to the amount of attention bestowed upon them, it making no difference, or at least very little difference, whether this attention is given in the way of opposition or of encouragement.

A well-known Indian story makes this point very clear. It tells of a certain instructor in magical powers, one of whose disciples, thinking that he now had received sufficiant instruction in the arts his master taught, asked to be allowed to put what he had learned to a practical test by attempting to walk across a river on the surface of the water.

"Very good," said the Guru when the pupil made his request, "you may now try if you have properly learned what I have tried to teach you. Only, if you wish to succeed in this trial, there is one thing you must take great care not to do as you go down to the river's bank; on no account must you think about the left hind-leg of a curly-tailed rhinoceros or you will be sure to sink in the water."

The pupil solemnly promised to bear in mind his revered teacher's warning to avoid the fatal thought. The necessary preparations having been made, he went, full of confidence, down to the river to make trial of his powers. But just as he got to the water's edge he suddenly stopped.

"What was that last counsel my Guru gave me?" he asked himself. "What was it he said I was not to think of?"

He stood a few moments vainly endeavouring to stimulate recollection. "Ah, now I remember," he said at last, smiling with relief. "He said I was not to think about the left hind-leg of a curly-tailed rhinoceros." Sure that now all was right, he boldly stepped out upon the water—and promptly sank.

"I must have made some mistake in the *mantra* or in the making of the *mandala*," he said to himself as he scrambled on to land again; and back he went to his place, and again and with great care went through all the formula and ritual of preparation. Again, keeping in mind his teacher's final injunction, he stepped out on the surface of the river, and again sank. Several times, undaunted, he repeated all, and each time with as little success as before. At length, a sadly crestfallen youth, he sought his teacher, and with melancholy visage told him of the miserable failure of all his attempts. The teacher eyed his pupil a moment and then asked:

"Did you, when you went upon the water, remember my last caution not to think about the left hind-leg of a curly-tailed rhinoceros?"

"Yes, indeed, master," replied the disconsolate disciple quickly, "not for a single moment did I forget what you told me."

With a slow, wise smile the teacher said: "That was well, very well indeed! But, it were well also that you did not forget what I think henceforth you will always remember:

that not think about a thing is the same thing as to think about it!."

In this little story the lesson which the teacher from the very beginning meant to impress upon his pupil was that active opposition to a thought, in its ultimate effect, is the same as active encouragement. And this is the truth on which is based the first method for getting rid of undesired and undesirable thoughts recommmended to the pupil in Buddhist mind-culture. The most effective method of getting rid of such thoughts is not the method of direct and forcible resistance to them. *The atmosphere in which any thought of whatever nature most surely dies is that of simple neglect.* In the subtle field of things mental, as in the grosser field of things material, direct opposition to anything in most cases does but cause it to set its foot more firmly to the ground and strike an attitude of more strenuous defence. The old story of the sun and the wind, and the success of the former in inducing the traveller to take off his cloak when the latter had failed, after exerting all its force, to tear it from him, holds true entirely in the sphere of things mental. And so the first method of banishing unwholesome thoughts recommended in Buddhist practice is that of turning the mind away from them to the contemplation of a thought of an opposite nature to that of which it is desired to be rid.

"*Just as*," says a Buddhist Scripture, "*a competent mason's apprentice makes use of a thin, slender pin to knock out, remove, and dispose of a thicker pin which he wishes to displace, so also, when through dwelling upon a certain idea, evil, insalutary, unwholesome thoughts bound up with Craving and Hatred and Delusion arise in a Bhikkhu, then he shall engender in his mind another idea connected with things good and salutary and wholesome, whereupon what is evil, insalutary and unwholesome will go to decay and disappear, and with its dissappearing the mind of the Bhikkhu will become settled, subdued, unified, concentrated.*"

Say that a thought of greed has arisen in any one's mind; instead of saying to oneself: "I will not think this thought of greed, I must not think this thought of greed," thus in reality fixing the mind's attention upon the unwelcome thought, the first thing to be tried in the effort to eject it from the mind is not—so to speak—to try to bundle it violently down the front steps, but simply and calmly to ignore its existence in the house of the mind, to turn the attention entirely away from it, and concentrate all the mind's force upon the thinking of a thought of the opposite nature, upon a thought of giving, of liberality, of generosity. Of course the thought of greed will not at once give way and leave the field clear for its opposite, but for some time will keep pushing itself forward in a persistent attempt to retain its occupation of the mind; but just as persistently it must be ignored, and all the attention fixed on that opposite. Very soon, as the result of such treatment, its attempts to hold captive the attention will weaken, and at length, if the pupil maintains his effort, the new thought will hold undisputed possession of his mind. This process must be repeated every time the undesired thought presents itself, until almost automatically the mind turns of itself to the desired thought at every threatened appearance of the undesired.

The hour of final victory by this method over an undesired thought will be considerably hastened if, in addition to cultivating the opposite desired thought, this latter is given expression to in a deed, at the very first opportunity that presents itself. If the greedy, avaricious person, fully aware that he is not yet free from his avariciousness, in spite of the fact that, by a deliberate effort of will, from time to time he makes himself part with something he fondly loves—money or any other possession—to those who have more need of it than himself, he will find that thereby, from being a grasping person, he is gradually making himself over into a generous one, and all in good time, the thought and deed at present only with effort put into effect will become a fixed habit, and from being a niggard the man will at length have become an open-handed, liberal giver. He will have altered his character in a direction that will bring him by so much nearer to deliverance from bondage to material things. "Sow a deed," some one has said, "and you reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you reap a character. Sow a character, and you reap a destiny." It is a profoundly true saying. Only, a Buddhist, making a slight addition to it, would say: "Sow a thought, and you reap a deed. Sow a deed, and you reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you reap a character. Sow a character, and you reap a destiny—for character is destiny."

Or suppose that the thought of which we wish to be rid is a thought of anger or hatred against any one, we shall not easily get free from it by saying to ourselves: "I do not want this thought of hatred to stay in my mind. I will not allow this thought of hatred to stay in my mind. I will make this thought of hatred leave my mind." To follow such a course is only to concentrate one's attention all the more closely upon the thought of hatred, thereby in all probability increasing its strength, and certainly for the time being giving it a secure hold upon the mind. The proper procedure is to leave the thought of hatred severely alone, treat it as if it did not exist, and by a determined effort of will, turn the mind towards its opposite, towards a thought of goodwill and loving-kindless. Again, as in the case of a thought of generosity, it will be well if the thought of love is followed up by an actual deed expressive of love and goodwill towards the person hated, whenever an opportunity for such presents itself. If, instead of doing things expressive of hatred towards the person, we perform acts of kindness, and still keep on performing such acts on every possible occasion, even though our thoughts may still be far from fixed in an attitude of constant friendliness toward him, in time the result will be that such an attitude will become a fixed one, and from being at enmity with the said person we shall have become a friend. At first, of course, like first steps in everything, such a course of behaviour will be found extremely difficult, and one may be tormented by the uneasy feeling that one is a hypocrite, and well on the way to becoming a sort of psychological monstrosity among specimens of the human species—a creature whose actions are not the expression of his inclinations but of his disinclinations. If, however, despite this natural feeling, the practice is continued, its reward will come in the shape of a character that will gradually be transformed into that which one desires. *One simply cannot go on hating a person to whom one is constantly doing kindnesses.* The steadily maintained practice of thoughts and deeds of kindness will work their sure magic in effecting a complete change of character, and the irritable, angry, choleric man will eventually become mild, forbearing, good tempered. As in the case of the avaricious man, he will have got rid of the unwholesome state of mind of which he wished to be rid, simply by ignoring it and turning all his attention to its opposite.

There is another way in which Right Endeavour may be practised in the overcoming of undesirable states of mind. It is a way that is essentially an appeal to the instincts of prudence in man, and is therefore one that will commend itself more powerfully to some natures than to others, and by these natures be more likely to be practised with success than by others differently constituted. It consists in cultivating the habit of looking always to the consequences of each action before committing it—in this case, of looking to the consequences of every mental action, every motion of the mind, every thought, before letting it have full play. If any thought of a bondage-making tendency (and "bondage-making" is the Buddhist equivalent for what is usually called "bad"), any thought of violent attraction or repulsion with respect to any person or thing, arises or threatens to arise in the mind, before it goes any further, a man is to pause and reflect upon the direction in which such a thought will take him, whether towards or away from deliverance. He will seriously consider and weigh to what deeds, such thoughts indulged in, will be likely to lead; then, what consequences will most probably follow upon those deeds; and then, what further results will be likely to flow from these again. So doing, if he but looks deeply enough, he will perceive in the case of the "evil" thoughts, that are threatening to arise in him, a train of the most undesirable consequences, results painful and sorrow-bringing to himself and to others, and leading him away from, instead of towards, deliverance. Thus seriously reflecting, and perceiving the probable outcome of the thoughts that are about to take possession of him, the man will be checked, daunted, perhaps even terrified at what he sees, and hastily drop the evil thought from his mind as he would a burning coal that might have fallen upon his hand.

Or, to quote the words of the Buddha Himself "*Just as a woman or a man in full vigour of life, upon perceiving that round their neck is hung a piece of carrion, forthwith will be seized with disgust and loathing and horror, even so let the Bhikkhu give his mind to the investigation and consideration of the wretchedness and misery bound up with thoughts of Craving and of Hatred and of Delusion, and thereupon all evil, unwholesome thoughts will die away from within him, and his mind will become settled and concentrated.*"

Again, it is by no means an easy thing to make the initial endeavour in this kind of investigation. When first attempted it will result in many failures, especially so if the thought of which it is desired to be rid is one of anger. Such thoughts do not usually give a man time for anything that might in the remotest degree approach investigation of their consequences. They generally rise like a river in spate without any warning, and sweep before them all that lies in their course. And yet it is extraordinary what repeated effort will do in the direction of mastering and controlling the mind, let but the effort be maintained for a sufficient length of time. It is only because our race as a whole has not yet seen the necessity, or even considered the possibility, of training the mind to do our bidding as in a considerable degree the members of the body—the hands and feet and other parts—have been so trained, that the effort to make our mind act as we will it to do, to many seems such a quixotic and extraordinary one, and the actual doing of it a flat impossibility. Yet there is no sound reason why our minds should not serve us as obediently as do our hands and our feet. Why should not the mind move in the direction our will decides, even as do these inferior organs? Why should it not, like them, be our servant to do our bidding, instead of lording it over us as master, going its own imperious way? It would be thought passing strange did any person's hands or feet behave just in whatever way they chose, defying their owner to control them or dictate what they should do and not do. And if the latter, being asked why he permitted such a strange state of affairs to continue, should reply that he could not help it, he would be regarded with pity as distinctly a pathological case; and those interested in him, his friends and relatives, would hasten to persuade him to see a doctor about the matter before his case grew any worse.

But, rightly regarded, it is no whit less an abnormal state of affairs, a disease in the constitution of a human being, something urgently requiring to be put right, that a man's mind, the finest, most characteristic part of him, his most delicate tool, should break loose from his control as often as it does. Only the fact that such a state of things has been allowed to run on for so long with the great majority of our race, makes it possible for us to contemplate such a strange phenomenon with anything but the profoundest astonishment. The second method of Buddhist Right Endeavour in regard to the mind, is endeavour to set right this state of affairs, as deplorable as it is absurd, and by the cultivation of the habit of reflectiveness, to bring this so unruly faculty of our nature into something like the same order and submission to our will as has already been imposed in a goodly measure upon our other organs and faculties. And as with every practice, so with this: the longer it is persisted in, the easier it becomes. And we may hope that at length it will take its place as a fixed element in the character, and the mind be as obedient to the behests of the will as any other organ in the human constitution.

There is another method of attempting to acquire control of the mind's motions, which, while not exactly parallel with the method just dealt with, yet bears a very close resemblance to it, and, well practised, would be equally as efficacious in producing the results desired. This method, instead of being one of contemplating the train of causation likely to *follow* upon a certain thought-act, consists in making the attempt to ascertain and track out the train of causation through which it has arisen or threatens to arise, the train of causation that has *preceded* the undesired thought-act.

This is a particularly effective method of procedure when the thought which it is desired to subdue is one of anger. Anger simply cannot survive this turning upon it of the search-light of analysis, but shrivels up and shrinks away to nothing beneath its beams. This method consists in asking, when a thought of anger arises, what precisely it is that one is angry at; next, why one is angry at it; and after that, the why of this why, seeking to trace the chain of causation further and further backward, just as in the previously mentioned method one tried in similar fashion to trace the train of causation forward. Here, in this endeavour to trace its causes, we shall find that the anger has melted away, disappeared from sight, long before we have arrived—as we surely shall—at the conclusion that there never was really any substantial reason for allowing such a misfortune to overtake us as is involved in being overmastered by angry passion.

Again it may seem ludicrous that anything so sudden and tempestuous in its manifestations, as is anger, should be overcome by means in comparison so seemingly flimsy and feeble. And again it is a case of the quiet, pervasive power of patient, unwearied persistence and repetition. Each fresh impulsion transmitted along a given nerve-track, makes a little easier the one that follows, breaks down a little of the resistance to it, until at last a definite groove for such impulsions is, as it were, hollowed out, and as we say, a habit is formed. And a habit so formed, in its turn is strong enough to offer at least some resistance to what at first might have seemed a wholly irresistible tendency of a contrary character, and at last can actually become so firmly rooted as entirely to overcome it. By persistent practice it may at length become a perfectly natural and instinctive thing, when anger is rising, to stop oneself and enquire what it is all about, albeit at the first suggestion of such an idea it would often seem an almost hopeless thing even to attempt to do. Yet there are people who can perform this seeming miracle. And since the possession of such a power, like any other, cannot have come about by accident but only by cultivation and development, these must have cultivated it and so obtained it. And if they have cultivated it and made it their own, so also can others of their kind.

If all these three eminently sound and sane methods of overcoming evil states of mind should still remain ineffective, there remains a fourth and last to be tried as a final resource: resort may be made to the method of force direct. "If," says a Scripture, "evil, insalutary, unwholesome thoughts allied to Craving and Hatred and Delusion still persist in arising, then with teeth clenched and tongue pressed to palate, the Bhikkhu by main force must constrain and coerce his mind, and so doing, those evil, insalutary, unwholesome thoughts will go to decay and disappear."

This method of overcoming evil states of mind would appear to be based, in part at least, upon the fact that just as mind affects body, so body affects mind. Nearly every one has had experience that when the mind has been depressed or in any other way disturbed by some great rush of feeling or emotion, a very noticeable corresponding effect has been produced upon the body. A fit of anger produces a prolonged attack of indigestion with many people. Profound anxiety leads to a disturbance in the normal functioning of various internal organs. On the other hand, in these days of "Christian Science," "Mental Science," "Faith Healing," and "Auto-suggestion," many have seen and experienced the powerful effects for good produced upon a deranged body by the directing toward it of certain specific thoughts of physical health and general well-being.

But there is another equally noteworthy fact concerning the relations between body and mind, and it is this: when certain deliberately willed and adopted attitudes of body are taken up, they may produce certain specific effects on the mind. If attitudes of mind affect the body, complementary-wise attitudes of body affect the mind. If, for instance, one is annoyed, deliberately putting the lines of the face into the configuration expressive of pleasuse will prove a not inconsiderable help in actually producing a pleased frame of mind and getting rid of the feeling of displeasure. If, in dealing with any difficulty that life brings us daily in greater or lesser number, one feels timid and irresolute before it, fearful of ill success or flat failure, quite a measure of courage and resolution may be obtained simply by clenching the fists and adopting a stiff and rigid attitude of body. Or should grief and depression be weighing down the mind, the assuming of the attitude of a lifted head and swinging gait will be found considerably to assist in dispelling the mental cloud of gloom. It is said by some who are in a position to know, that a good deal of the valour and contempt for pain and death shown by the Japanese is due to a skilful use of the knowledge they possess of the effects produced on the mind by the manipulation of certain parts of the physical frame.

In this connection there is one practice that can safely be recommended to all as a powerful aid in the acquisition of calm of mind, and therefore of the ability to carry out successfully the other methods of controlling the mind already mentioned, and that is the practice of deep and regular breathing. If for any reason the mind is furiously agitated, and the will consequently experiences great difficulty in bringing to birth wholesome, desirable states of mind, to sit down alone in any easy position and quietly and regularly breathe in and out for several minutes, taking care only to make the rate of breathing neither so slow nor so fast as to cause distress to the lungs, is a sure and effective way of bringing some measure at least of quietude to a much perturbed mind, making the remainder of the work by so much the easier of accomplishment. Here the purely physical action of the body is called to the aid of the mind with decided advantage. And there is nothing in the least magical or mysterious about the operation. It is a simple physiological effect that is produced; but not for that is it any the less useful and beneficial. Only, again be it said, the practice ought not to be carried to such an extent as to cause distress to the lungs, else all its purposed calming effect will be neutralised, to say nothing of the possible physical harm that may actually be done at the time, or later may develop, as the result of strain on the breathing apparatus.

Buddhist Right Endeavour, then, is endeavour to master and control the mind by turning it in desired, to the exclusion of undesired, directions; by considering and reflecting upon the painful, sorrow-bringing consequences of allowing it to follow undesired directions; by investigating the causes that have led it to take undesired directions; and, finally, calling in the aid of the body, by main force to compel the mind to take the direction in which it is desired it should go. Endeavour such as this is one of the elements in that stage of the Path which is called Mind-culture. The remaining two practices that complete this division are Right Recollectedness and Right Concentration; Right Behaviour in its three divisions of Right Speech and Action and Livelihood, being the necessary and indispensable preparation for Mind-culture. For, as says the Sutta: "*Even as hand is cleansed by hand and foot by foot, so is Right Behaviour purified by Right Understanding, and Right Understanding by Right Behaviour. And of all the right behaviour and right understanding that are in the world, the right behaviour of the man of right understanding, and the right understanding of the man of right behaviour, are by far the most precious.*"

Now to this teaching of endeavour as one of the necessary constituents of the Path that leads to Enlightenment, the most obvious objection certain to arise in the majority of minds is this—that in a world where effect follows upon cause with remorseless and unfailing regularity, it is impossible to put forth the effort demanded, since such effort would amount to the introduction of a new cause into the already closed circle of causes that is a world—a thing impossible.

Thoroughly well grounded, however, as this objection is, those grounds are of a purely theoretical nature. It is beyond all question that into a theoretically perfect closed circle of causes it is impossible theoretically to introduce any new cause. Yet, *practically*, we all know that we can put forth effort when we choose if only a sufficient motive for doing so is presented to us, and this despite all theories to the opposite effect which may be flourishing in full vigour in the mind of the very same person who possesses this knowledge, at the very same time. This is one of those unresolvable antinomies of which there are many other examples, inseparable from a life such as ours, lived as it is under the cloud of Unknowingness or *Avijjā*, an antinomy impossible of any satisfactory solution while we continue to be enswathed in that darkness. We must simply accept the inexplicable fact—for fact it is—along with others of like sort, that though theoretically we are unable to put forth endeavour or effort, practically we can and do every day of our lives. And it is with the practical, and with the practical only, that the teaching of the Buddha has anything to do. Never for a moment does the religion called Buddhism concern itself with theoretics as such. To each and every question which has its basis solely in the curious, idly questioning mind of man and not in any ground of actual practice, it simply declines to make reply, deeming such questions vain and profitless alike to ask or to answer.

It would almost seem, when one considers the constant refusal of the Buddha to solve purely intellectual difficulties, as if the central point of His doctrine, the point upon which everything else therein is pivoted, were the one plain fact of *Avijjā*, Ignorance. Before taking any other step towards a comprehension of the teaching, the pupil of the Buddha would seem to be expected to burn into his mind in indelible characters the idea that all man's thinking and speaking and acting are done under the conditions of this ignorance, at every moment are soaked, saturated, pervaded through and through with *Avijjā*, with Unknowingness. Only when the pupil has done something like this would he appear to be in a position to go forward with his enquiries into the teaching with any degree of assurance that he will not run grievously astray. He has to grasp, and never for a moment lose hold of, the idea that man is in the dark; that everything he thinks and says and does is nothing but a more or less successful groping in this darkness, and, regarded as a means of acquiring thoroughly accurate knowledge of what is and what is not, has just as much value as groping in darkness usually has, and not a whit more.

With such a view of man's position, it is obvious that Buddhism can teach but one thing, the most patently necessary thing for men in such case—how to get out of the darkness into the light: this, and naught beside: for compared with this, any other pursuit were the most futile of follies. The teaching of the Buddha has nothing to do with the construction of a complete and perfect theory of things; it is simply and solely a course of instruction so to act as to get beyond the Ignorance which imagines it sees things at all! It is not in the least designed to give full satisfaction to the intellect, but only to furnish such guidance in action, mental, verbal, and physical, as will bring man to a point where all the intellectual problems that in his darkness now puzzle him, will be seen to be no problems at all, but mere seeming-problems which, as it were, solve themselves in the perception that they are purely products of the darkness in which they arise, and with its disappearance themselves also disappear. From the standpoint of the Buddha, all cogitation and speculation and theorising, are cogitation and speculation and theorising in the darkness about the darkness, and so utterly worthless. Hence the objection as to the illogicality of saying that all in our world is an inevitable flow of cause and effect, and then demanding of men that they shall put forth effort to escape from its circle, is dismissed as being, in some sort, another of the products of that darkness under which all our logical, mental processes are carried out; and we are referred to the simple, practical fact of which we all have experience each day in life, that we can and do put forth effort when the appropriate conditions for its exercise make themselves manifest. We are advised to ignore the theory and all it appears to involve of paralysing effect upon action. We are counselled not to allow ourselves to be in the least perturbed by the logical difficulty, but simply to act and leave the actual result achieved by such action to furnish the amply sufficient reply to any merely logical objection to it.

And here another objection will present itself to the minds of many. It will be asked : Suppose that we do dismiss logic and all its works in this cavalier fashion and simply take the practical steps recommended, what guarantee have we that doing so will bring about the desirable result promised?

To this question the frank reply must be given : There is no such guarantee available in the matter, at least of the nature of what is usually called guarantee. At this point in Buddhism comes in that element absent from no religion on the face of the earth—the element of "faith". No one will, or indeed can, go forward and follow the course of action prescribed by the Buddha for the attaining of Deliverance from Darkness—which is the same thing as Deliverance from Suffering—unless he possesses some measure at least of faith, of trust, of confidence that this which he is told to do will actually, if followed out, bring the result promised. Without some such faith as this, it is impossible, indeed absurd, that he should take a single step of the kind advised. When one starts out upon any road to any place one wishes to reach, one always does so with the *belief* that the said road actually does lead to the said place, even although one has never with one's own eyes seen that it actually does so.

But does the necessity for this faith—or *Saddhā*, as it is called in Pāli—imply that reason is quite ignored in Buddhism? it may be asked.

The answer is: By no means. Reason is to be used so far as reason can be used. When, as the outcome of faith or confidence that it does lead to the desired goal, a step is taken on the Path, reason is to be used in enquiring if that step gives any promise that further steps on the same road will be worth the taking. If reason's judgment is favourable, then another step will be taken, and another and another, so long as the decision of the reason continues to be favourable, so long as proof continues to present itself that what has been promised is coming nearer to fulfilment and, indeed, already being fulfilled in continually increasing degree. Reason is always to be used to the fullest extent of its powers. Only, it is never to be forgotten that it is only an instrument to an end, and withal a by no means perfect instrument. Like everything else in a world such as ours, it is to be considered as of only provisional, not of absolute value—a something, for the time being useful, as a means towards the attaining of an end of incomparably more importance than any means, however important, used in its attainment. The very teaching of the Buddha Himself is of importance only as a means to the attainment of that end: nothing more. It is to be regarded merely as an instrument for the accomplishment of a certain work, and to be thrown away when it has served its purpose, is no longer needed! The *Dhamma* of the Enlightened One is no more than a particularly useful axe wherewith, if we make diligent use of it, we may cut and hew our way through the jungle growth of *Avijjā* or *Samsāra*—for these two are one—into the open plain, the clear unobstructed sunlight of *Vijjā*, Knowledge, *Nibbāna*; and that goal reached, it is to be flung away. Of what further use is an axe when there is no more jungle to be cut down? Or, to use the Master's own simile: His teaching is a raft and only a raft, useful as a means whereby the traveller may cross the stream of manifested existence to the other shore; but when that shore of safety is reached, simply to be left behind while the traveller proceeds on his way, unimpeded by a thing for which he has no further use.

"Suppose," says the Buddha to his followers one day, "suppose that a man, coming upon a long journey, finds in his way a great, broad water, the hither side beset with many fears and dangers, but the further side secure and free from danger, and that there is no boat whereby to cross the flood nor any bridge leading from this to the other shore. And suppose this man to say to himself: 'Truly this is a great and a wide water . . . and means whereby to get to the other shore there is none. How if I gather together reeds and twigs and leaves, and out of them make for myself a raft; and then, supported on my raft and working hands and feet, cross to the safety of the other shore!' Accordingly, disciples, suppose this man to do as he has said, and make a raft and, launching it upon the water and working hands and feet, come in safety to the other shore.

"And now, the flood crossed, the further shore attained, suppose this man should say, 'Verily serviceable indeed has this my raft been to me, for by its means, working hands and feet, I have safely crossed to this other shore. How now if I lift up my raft and put it on my head or shoulders and so proceed upon my way!' What think ye, disciples?—so doing, would such a man be acting rightly as regards his raft?"

"Nay, indeed, Master," the disciples reply.

"What then ought such a man to do if he would act rightly as regards his raft?" the Buddha continues. "Thus, disciples, ought this man to consider within himself: 'Of a truth this raft has been very serviceable to me, for, supported by this raft and working hands and feet, I am crossed in safety to this further shore. But how now if I lay it up on the bank, or just leave it to sink in the water, and proceed with my journey!' Thus considering, disciples, this man would be acting rightly in the matter of his raft.

"In the same manner also, disciples, do I put my teaching before you—under the similitude of a raft, designed as a means of escape, not meant for a constant possession. Understanding well this similitude of the raft, disciples, righteousness (*Dhamma*) is to be left behind, to say naught of unrighteousness (*A-dhamma*)!"

Here we see in as striking a manner as it is possible to put it, what little permanent importance is to be attached to anything in an *Avijjā*-shrouded world. Everything in it, absolutely everything, even the teaching of a Perfectly Enlightened One, is of merely provisional, transient, relative value. Nothing whatever in it is to be held as of permanent worth, not even the teaching that nothing is to be so held!

With this as the view which Buddhism takes of itself—the most precious knowledge in the world as being the means of escape from such a world—it need scarcely occasion surprise if it values equally lightly every other kind of knowledge regarded as of absolute importance, as worthy of being held as a "constant possession".

To repeat it once more: Buddhism is a practice and only a practice for the attainment of a certain end—deliverance from ignorance, that is, from limitation, that is, from suffering. If at times it gives the impression of being concerned with theory pure and simple, such theory wherever advanced, is so advanced, not at all for its own sake but simply and solely as an adjunct to, an accessory part of, the practice: this and nothing more. Were it possible for any to carry out the practice of the *Dhamma* knowing no single jot of the theory connected therewith, and if such a one did actually carry out the practice, then he would be as good a "Buddhist" as any other. He would certainly be more likely to reach the goal than another who, master of all the theory, omitted to carry it out in practice. For the latter, despite all his theoretical knowledge, would never reach the goal at all. It is no mere accident that the teaching of the Buddha is given the name of Path. If it is so called, it is because it so is. And a path is always something to be trodden; it is not something merely to be talked about, an agreeable topic for a little dilettante conversation. Indeed, it would be hard to suggest what other profitable use can be made of a path save that of treading it.

Treading this Path pointed out by the Buddha, then, its most important constituent is that called Right Endeavour. For there is no one, not even the Teacher of that Path, who can carry us a single inch forward thereon. Each individual for himself must make his own forward way to the goal of Deliverance by his own sole effort—effort directed first to the purifying of his conduct; then through purified conduct, to the purifying of the mind; and last, through a purified mind, to the winning of perfect wisdom.

After this it were superfluous to add that every statement to the effect that the Teaching of the Tathāgata is a Teaching that encourages in its adherents sloth and torpor and slumbrous inactivity, is, not to put too fine a point upon it, a pure and unadulterated libel. Such a charge might be comprehensible if the Buddha offered to do something directly for us—on His own shoulders to bear us along the Path he points out; Himself row us across the roaring flood of *Samsāra*, we having naught to do but lie back in ease and allow Him to do us the service. But the Buddha does nothing of the kind.

He never offers to do anything for us. He only offers to show us how we may do something for ourselves—a tremendous and a wholesome difference! He offers us a raft well able to keep us afloat on the surface of the stream, but we must work our own hands and feet if we would have it bear us across its raging waters to security supreme, the security called *Nibbāna.*

Another charge that is frequently brought against the Buddha's teaching by those who ought to know better—scholars having access to the original documents of that teaching—is equally unfounded. These declare that it is a religion of melancholy and gloom and dull despair. And as for its adherents, "the hand of Karma lies heavy upon them, crushing out life and hope," cheerfully remarks one such recent writer in a phrase which, considered as the effort of a picturesque imagination, is doubtless not without its merits, but from the standpoint of a strict adhesion to truth and fact, can hardly be regarded with quite the same satisfaction.

There is such a thing as gravitation; and there always has been, and still is, something rather remorseless about its operation. It will dash to the ground and cruelly mangle the delicate body and limbs of a little child that leans too far over a window, and shatter in pieces the valuable life of a mechanical scientist who lets his æroplane escape from his control—and do both with equal callousness and with equal certainty. But no one has yet recorded—possibly there is no reason to do so!—that parents and aeroplanists are noticeably crushed and lifeless and hopeless of bearing in view of the fact of gravitation. So far as ordinary observation goes, these two classes of persons generally endeavour so to arrange matters that gravitation shall not have opportunity to do them or theirs any very serious harm. And it has yet to be demonstrated that Buddhists, as Buddhists, are less capable of exercising plain common sense in their life-affairs than the average parent or aviator in this.

If the Buddha taught that all men lie under the weight of some vast, primeval curse, wherefrom they can look for no deliverance save through the grace and goodwill of another; and that their one chance of obtaining this grace and goodwill is strictly confined to the limits of one little lifetime of seventy years or so, the penalty of failure to do so within that period being the dreadful one of an eternity of unbroken suffering, one could understand the *Buddha-Dhamma* being branded as a doctrine of gloom and despair. It would well deserve to be so branded; for what more gloomy, what more despairing teaching can be conceived of than one that would thus condemn by far the greater majority of the human race to a fate of hopeless, unending misery?

But the Awakened One teaches nothing even in the remotest degree resembling this. The only curse—so He teaches—under which man suffers, is the curse of Ignorance, of Unknowingness; and this curse is not fixed upon him by any power outside himself. At any time he chooses, he may begin to remove it without reference to the goodwill or pleasure of any other, simply by putting forth the effort required to remove it, absolutely no other condition attaching. And to the period during which this effort may be made no statute of limitations whatever applies. The Path remains open for each and all to tread so long as a single traveller remains to tread it. "The last of the Buddhas," says a Scripture, "shall not enter into *Nibbāna* until every grain of sand that now is shall have come unto Deliverance." The simple existence of Right Effort or Endeavour—which is just endeavour to attain to this Deliverance—as an integral component of the Noble Eightfold Path of all the Buddhas, and the fact that the possibility of the exercise of that Right Effort, that Right Endeavour, knows neither limit nor term in time or in space, is the ample, all-sufficient answer to any and every accusation against the Teaching of the Awakened One to the effect that it is a doctrine of hopelessness and despair. None can be hopeless, none need despair, when he knows that at any moment, whether he be old or young, weak or strong, by the faithful practice of Right Endeavour he may begin to turn his steps in the direction that at last, surely, will bring him to the clear, sunlit heights of Deliverance from all Ill.

CHAPTER VII

RIGHT RECOLLECTEDNESS

To every man who thinks, the most unsatisfactory and vexatious thing in life, the real *Dukkha* of existence, is the sense of his inability to get rid of the spectacles imposed upon mental vision by his own temperament, and to see things free from the colouring imparted to them by these glasses—to see things as they are. The history of the individual man so soon as he has passed the purely animal stage, is simply the history of his attempts to draw ever closer and closer to true, direct vision of what is, in contradistinction to what only seems. The history of the races of men is the same. Philosophy, religion, science, under whatever skies they may be found, in so far as they are sincere, are only so many attempts on the part of a section of humanity to reach the same end.

In one religious philosophy this aim of human effort is perceived more clearly and pursued with more single-hearted endeavour, more direct purpose, than is the case in any other religion or philosophy. That religious philosophy is the Teaching of Him who is called the Buddha—a Teaching which, reduced to its ultimate elements, is simply the vision of things as they truly are; all the prescriptions and recommendations and injunctions to which that Great One from time to time gave utterance, having for their object but this one end, to help His fellowmen with least delay to that great vision. "With least delay," because the mere process of living, by sheer force of its continuance, at long last, in experienced suffering, will end by forcing upon every man the vision of the true nature of things. The Teaching of the Buddha is only the teaching ceaselessly proclaimed by the whole universe of things about us, put into briefer and more readily recognisable form. The Buddha, any Buddha—Gotama or any of His predecessors in the promulgation of the Way to Correct Vision—superficial appearances notwithstanding, is not a suddenly emerging, inexplicable phenomenon having no point of connection with a before or an after, but a perfectly natural integral part of the order of things, an essential element in a universe where is the undesirable, and where consequently there must be a way out of that undesirable, and Those who shall make known that way out.

The second step in the Mind-culture section of the Way to Correct Vision taught by the Awakened One Gotama, is a practice which aims directly at such vision, the practice of Right Recollectedness. Albeit in order of mention placed second among the practices pertaining to the culture and training of mind, and only seventh in order of mention taking the members of the "Path" as a whole, it is in reality the most important of them all without exception. The other members of the Path are more or less stages or transition steps to something else, helps to the achievement of something beyond, but this one practice is complete in itself. Of it the Buddha declared, that if persisted in with determination and energy for seven consecutive days only without a break, it would bring the man who so practised it to the realisation of the true nature of himself and of all about him, and with that to the ending of all attachment to anything whatsoever, seen or heard or thought, and so to deliverance from all bondage for evermore.

In the practice of this Right Recollectedness, the first exercise recommended is that of calm, cool, scrutinising contemplation of the fact of body, of the living, breathing, physical organism oneself and each man in the world finds the most prominent and insistent factor of existence, and to tell oneself simply, honestly and candidly just what one finds when one so looks, without importing into the picture anything that fancy or imagination might be inclined to dictate. One is asked to perform an act of pure objective contemplation of the physical manifestation, body, and what one might have expected or liked to see is not to be allowed to have the least say in the presentation arrived at. Only what is, is to be set before the consciousness, to the complete exclusion of what only seems to be.

Following this prescription, we perceive that what we have before us is an aggregation of so much solid and so much liquid matter, pervaded by heat, and informed and stirred by various radiations or vibrations; or, in the old language of the original Scripture, "an aggregation compounded of the elements of earth, water, fire, and air". On this picture the practiser of Right Recollectedness is asked to look and keep on looking until he has realised just what it is he has before him, and made clear and distinct to his mind the difference between this he actually sees and what all his former habitual, careless ways of looking had hitherto led him to imagine he saw in the body. He is to look and keep on looking, until by force of his steady, unwavering, attentive scrutiny, he sees what is and nothing else.

And this is not easy; very far from it. For just as into every act of pure sense-perception, even the simplest-seeming, such as looking at a flower, there enters a whole host of elements that are not present in the bare act of perception at all—crowds of memories, inferences, deductions, conclusions; so into the ordinary act of the mental contemplation of anything there enter preconceived ideas, old habits of thought, prejudices, suppositions, imaginations, all of which tend in greater or less degree to make the resultant picture not a true representation of the phenomenon contemplated, but a more or less distorted version of the same. To get rid of these error-producing factors is the precise design of this first exercise in Right Recollectedness. To attain even a moderate degree of success therein requires long and repeated practice, so powerful are the influences of old use and wont. And to attain perfection in it may take a whole lifetime—perhaps many lifetimes. But that need not daunt any in beginning upon the practice. A beginning has to be made some time upon the march towards truth, and we have each of us all the time there is—the *now*!

The next exercise in Right Recollectedness is the contemplation of the body in the performance of its most ordinary functions, more particularly that most common and necessary of them, the operation of breathing. Here again looking simply for, and taking note only of, the facts of the case, we are asked to see in the operation of physical breathing a process of expulsion of air from an interior cavity of the body, and its drawing in again thither through the channel of the nostrils, under the impulsion of a motion of mind corresponding thereto. When air issues from the nozzle of a blacksmith's bellows, and sets his fire glowing, it does so, we are told, because there is a hollow air-chamber called a bellows in sound working order, a properly connected tube joined thereto, and the blacksmith there working the handle of the bellows. Similarly, when a body breathes, what is needed for the performance of that operation is a pair of lungs in working condition, nostrils free from obstruction, and the mental impulsion that sets the lungs in motion. If any of these conditions are absent, then no act of breathing takes place, just as no air comes from the blacksmith's bellows to set his fire going if the bellows is broken, or the connecting tube damaged, or the handle of the bellows is not worked up and down. These are such very obvious facts about the blowing of a blacksmith's bellows, as about the breathing of a living body, that expressly to call attention to them would seem more than superfluous. But it is by reason of their very obviousness that they have to be deliberately recollected and borne in mind, else they are likely to be forgotten, and unwarranted ideas in connection with them arise, from simple lack of attention to the fact that such ideas are arising. The practiser of Right Recollectedness as regards the body's breathing, has for his aim the removal of all mistakes due to carelessness in the contemplation of the phenomenon under observation, and the defining clearly in his mind the simple facts of the process of breathing, just as they are, and nothing else beside.

As with breathing, so with the other, more external operations or actions of the body, such as walking, standing still, and so forth, together with the various movements of its different members such as stretching forth or drawing in the arms, and the like. Upon these also the Bhikkhu who is seeking to practise Right Recollectedness is asked to fix his attention, and from a steady, unwavering, impartial scrutiny, define to himself what exactly are the facts in presence of which he finds himself. So doing, he is told, he will find that the common phrase "I go," or "I move my arm," while perfectly admissible as a term of common speech in indicating the phenomenon in question, is an error if taken as an exact description of the happening, to ascertain the exact nature of which is precisely his task in practising Right Recollectedness. He is told that from the standpoint of strict truth and fact—which is the standpoint of Right Recollectedness—it is as erroneous for him to say when his body moves in walking, "I go," as it would be for a cart that is being pulled along a road to say, "I go"! He is to recollect that the cart does not go. He is to bear in mind that when a cart moves, it is because two oxen, urged thereto by a driver, pull it. And in exactly the same way, when the body, as a whole or in any of its parts, moves, he is to know that it is because like a cart-driver, the duly appropriate motions of mind set working the "oxen" of the muscles concerned, which thereupon move the "cart" attached, the body. In every other operation of the physical form, in eating and drinking or whatever else it may be he is doing, the Bhikkhu is steadily to bear in mind and never to forget that an exactly similar sequence of causation is running its course, and no other plausible but wholly unwarranted notion concerning their nature is to be allowed to take possession of his mind. Thus is the Bhikkhu to practise Right Recollectedness as regards each one of the activities of body—of all bodies, as well as his own.

Further, since the practice of Right Recollectedness has for its object the deliverance of the Bhikkhu from cleaving to aught connected with body, his own or another's, he is counselled to bear ever in mind the unpleasant, repellent nature of the body's internal processes. He is called on to remember that, despite all else he may be inclined to think or mayhap wish to think, the body is but little better than a festering sore, with fine clothes as with goldleaf covered over, in order to spare men's feelings and help them to maintain to themselves that deception in the matter which most wish to practise. He is told to remind himself at every moment that, in the words of a Scripture, " this body of ours did not have its arising in the bosom of a lotus. It is not stuffed full of all manner of pleasant spices. Neither does it give forth sweet odours and substances. But in a place of filth and darkness was it born "—and there follows a description of the body's arising and subsequent functioning which assuredly is not pleasant to contemplate. But then the aim of the practiser of Right Recollectedness is not the vision of the pleasant but of the true, let this be what it may.

To ensure that the Bhikkhu shall not remain blind to the unenchanting nature of body, that he may get rid of the last remnants of his attraction towards the pain-bringing thing, he is further counselled to follow in his mind the whole course of decay and corruption to which it falls prey so soon as life has departed from it. He is to contemplate it, proceeding from a state of loathsome corruption through all the stages of its progressive disintegration, to the day when it is nothing but a heap of dust "white as a sea-shell," and to note and recollect continually that this is the sure, inevitable end of all the loveliness and beauty and grandeur and power of every body that has ever been—and of his too.

In accordance with that methodicalness which is such an outstanding feature in the Teaching of the Buddha, after scrutinising the body closely with intent to know just what it is and what it is not, the practiser of Right Recollectedness is called upon to exercise a like scrutiny with respect to the sensations of the body. These, he is asked to observe, are in a state of ceaseless mutation. Pain, pleasure, and feelings that are neither of pain nor of pleasure but simply indifferent, without respite follow one upon another in endless procession as long as life lasts. When any one of these three classes of sensation or feeling is present, the remaining two are absent; and all have their turn of being present, and so have nothing about them of a substantial, perduring nature. Of this the Bhikkhu is counselled to take good heed, and to ask himself if in any such perishable and perishing things there can possibly be aught to which it is profitable to cling.

Moreover, with mindful, scrutinising gaze directed upon what is usually considered to be desirable and pleasant sensation, the practiser of Right Recollectedness is told he will find that such so-called pleasurable sensation, in essence consists simply in the relieving of some pain, where it no other pain than the pain of *ennui*. To drink water, for instance, is a pleasurable sensation, but only if one is thirsty—that is, only if one is suffering from the distress of thirst to which this brings relief. At any other time the drinking of water would itself be a distress. To eat food is also a source of pleasant sensation, but only when one is hungry, as relief from that state of unpleasure. When one is satisfied, to eat is not a pleasure but a pain. To sleep is a pleasure only as it is the means of removing weariness and drowsiness, unpleasurable sensations. And as with these, so with all the actions of the body usually regarded as productive of pleasure. In actual truth these are not so much pleasure-producing as simply pain-relieving; and carried beyond the point where they relieve pain, by the law of the mutation of sensation, again become producers of actual pain—if of no other, of the pain, the distress of satiety. If a man is suffering from a burning fever, the application of ice to his fevered brow may indeed be a pleasure, bringing him temporary relief from the heat that oppresses him, but on a cold day the application of that same ice would be a positive pain. On a cold day, again the donning of a warm, heavy coat is a pleasurable thing, banishing the unpleasantness of cold, but on a hot day the same coat would be nothing but a burden and a distress. Of this the Bhikkhu is asked to take due note, and to recognise accordingly the absence of positive value and worth from all so-called pleasurable sensation.

In his practice of Right Recollectedness with regard to sensation, the Bhikkhu is further counselled to observe that it is with the sensations of the body as with the body itself: here as there, no real basis exists for any notion of "self". A little child, he is told, may indeed, as it sucks its mother's milk, say to itself, "I experience pleasure," but the grown man who has come to the fullness of his mental stature, in experiencing any pleasurable sensation is to be aware that there is no ground for "I" in the matter. He is to know that all he can rightly say, is, "A pleasurable sensation has arisen";—this only, if he would abide strictly by truth and fact.

He is counselled closely to scrutinise sensation and observe its entirely conditioned character. If, for instance, the sensation called sight arises, he is to note that this is so, first, because an organ called the eye is present; second, because within range of that eye there is a surface capable of reflecting light-rays; and third, because the eye is so placed that the rays of light from the surface in question are able to reach and impinge upon its retina. The Bhikkhu is told to note well and never for a moment forget that if any one of these three conditions is absent, then nothing that can be called sight can take place; and that conversely, when all three are present, sight *must* take place. In the act of seeing as in all else, there is nothing partaking of the capricious or haphazard; wherever the conditions necessary to its occurring are found, there it always occurs and must occur. In his recollected contemplation of the phenomenon of sight the Bhikkhu is to be aware that in strict truth, according to things as they really are, there is no just ground for the statement, "I see," but only for the statement, "There is seeing." And this discriminating and accurate envisagement of the operation of seeing is to be extended to all acts of sensing—to the acts of hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking.

For thinking too, in Buddhist belief, is only a species of sensing, the objects sensed in this case being ideas. As to see, is through the eye to become aware of forms, so, thinking is through the mind to become aware of ideas. As the eye is an organ for the apprehension of forms, so the mind is an exactly analogous organ for the apprehension of ideas. To think is thus to see with the mind; as to see optically is, in a manner, to think with the eye. Each of these operations is an act of sensing an object present. And as with the seeing of the organ of optical vision, so with the mind's seeing—if any of the three required factors are absent, no such thing as thinking takes place.

If the mind be in any way disordered in its functioning, if no idea comes in one way or another within range of it, and if such an idea does not actually come in contact with the organ of thinking, the mind in question, then no thinking takes place, there is no thought. Thinking too, like everything else, has its necessary conditions; these absent, it also is absent. Hence, in the perfectly recollected contemplation of the act of thinking inculcated in the seventh member of the Path, there is found no basis in truth and fact for any such saying as "I think". Just as one cannot rightly say, "I see," when alluding to the operation of optical vision, so one cannot rightly say "I see," in the case of mental vision. One may not say, "I think"; one is only entitled to say, "There is thinking; there is thought". Of course the practice of Right Recollectedness in this particular has no quarrel with the ordinary usage of the expressions, "I see," or "I think". These modes of speech are a convenience such as can scarcely be dispensed with in ordinary human intercourse, if in addressing one another, men are not to be tangled up in wholly needless complications. But what the practiser of Right Recollectedness is aiming at is a *completely accurate* presentation to himself of what is happening at each successive moment of experience. Pursuing such aim he perceives that all he is really entitled to affirm when he senses anything through any of his sense-organs up to that finest of them all, the mind, is that such and such a form of sense-action is present, and nothing more. When this is seen with perfect, utter clearness, and kept before the mind continually with respect to its own operations as well as those of the other sensing organs, then attachment to thinking, that last, most stubborn stronghold of the feeling of "I" is destroyed, and the mind is finally delivered "with the deliverance that comes of wisdom".

A further exercise in the practice of Right Recollectedness is that of a constant mindfulness, an ever-present awareness of the particular state of mind present at each moment, in respect of its tendency to lead towards or away from the deliverance just mentioned; in other words, awareness of the "goodness" or "badness" of each state of mind as fast as it arises, coupled with the taking of the measures necessary to remove the "bad" state of mind that may have arisen and to replace it by its "good" opposite.

In this particular of its practice, Right Recollectedness blends and in a way becomes one with that member of the Path which immediately precedes it in order of mention, Right Endeavour. For if the practiser of this branch of Right Recollectedness becomes aware of the arising within him of lustful craving, with complete awareness of what he is going to do and why, he deliberately turns his mind to the contemplation of the repulsive nature of the body and of the processes that are taking place within it. He also turns away his mind from all thought upon the particular forms that excite the state of mind of which he wishes to be rid. He exercises heedful care as to the food that he eats. He chooses his friends and associates with prudence and circumspection. He engages only in such conversation as might help him to get rid of lustful thoughts; he shuns all conversation that might prove an obstacle to his achievement of that end. So working and practising, he removes the first of the great obstructions on his pathway to deliverance.

Or if in his practice of Right Recollectedness in this particular of watchfulness over the mind, the Bhikkhu becomes aware within himself of the arising of anger and ill-will, then he promptly reminds himself that this is a "bad" state of mind, one that hinders his progress towards deliverance, and he takes the necessary steps to bring it to an end, to bring into being its contrary "good" state. He takes measures to beget in himself thoughts of loving-kindness, considering how profitable to himself and others is the cultivation of such thoughts, how productive of well-being and happiness to himself and all connected with him is the nature of the words and deeds that flow from such thoughts.

Or if in his watch upon his mind, the Bhikkhu finds that it tends to fall into a state of torpor and dullness, he sets himself to remove the causes of the same, and to bring himself into a state of activity and energy of mind. He regulates his eating, adopts such postures of body as militate against sluggishness and sleepiness, and takes care to live only where there is plenty of light and air. Deliberately and recollectedly he perseveres in these practices until he has overcome the undesired and undesirable state of mind that obstructs his onward way.

Or if the state of mind he discovers within himself is one of uneasy restlessness and profitless brooding, in his practice of Right Recollectedness he applies himself to get rid of these hindrances by the study of the Teaching that is intended above all things to bring rest and satisfaction to those who know and follow it, as also by enquiry regarding that Teaching of those who know more about it than himself. Thus does he exercise himself to rid his mind of its needless agitation and to bring it to coolness and calm.

Finally, if the Bhikkhu finds himself tormented by doubts and indecisions and uncertainties, then, as in the case of restlessness of mind, he is to beget a better state of mind by steady application to study and enquiry into the Teaching of the Nature of Things. From such study and enquiry at length will come knowledge; from knowledge, certainty and assurance; and so all dubitancy, all incertitude, all hesitancy, will be banished from his mind for ever.

Thus putting away those five great hindrances to freedom, lust and ill-will and sloth and agitation and uncertainty, by begetting their opposites in the use of the appropriate means and accessories, the Bhikkhu makes easier his approach to, and speedier his arrival at, the complete deliverance of the mind which is the one goal of all his efforts whatsoever.

Yet another exercise in the practice of Right Recollectedness has to do with a watchful observation and recollected awareness of the process by which arise within a man what are technically known as the "Ten Fetters". These Ten Fetters may arise in connection with every act of sensing an object, whether through eye or ear or nose or tongue or skin or mind. The example of such arising of the Fetters through the mutual encounter of the eye and a form, may be taken as type of all the rest.

In such a case, with the sighting of a pleasant form, there arises in the man of unguarded mind the feeling of desire to possess the said form, to have and to hold and to enjoy it. This is the first of the Ten Fetters—that of Lustful Craving. If, however, the object encountered is not a pleasant but an unpleasant one, then there arises in the unguarded mind antipathy to such a form, dislike and hatred towards it. This is the second Fetter—that of Anger or Ill-Will.

But in the case where the object seen is a pleasing one, and is obtained and enjoyed, there follows only too likely the proud feeling of possession, the feeling of exultation that "this is mine; it belongs to no other; great am I that know this delight possessed by myself, not by another!" Thus arises the Fetter called Pride of Self. Upon it follows the feeling born of unrestrained, unthinking indulgence in the delight obtained, finding expression in some such thought as: "This that I now enjoy is something real and substantial." So arises the Fetter of a wrong understanding of the nature of things, the Fetter of False Views. Deeming now what he enjoys is a veritable reality, questionings, dubitancies with regard to the supposed reality will present themselves to the mind of the thus mistaken man. "Has this always been? Will this always be?" and a host of similar queries will arise within his mind. Thus comes to be the Fetter called Doubt or Uncertainty. Then follows in the misguided being the intense desire just to be, to have existence, so only that he may be able again and again to repeat the enjoyment of his imagined real, substantial good; thus arises the Fetter of the Passion to Exist. Next arises the wish to make sure that in every existence obtained in the future the enjoyment craved will be unfailingly possessed, and the man gives himself to the performance of such rites and ceremonies as he thinks will ensure his arising again in some happy form of existence, in some sphere of being where it will be in his power to gratify his every desire for enjoyment. Thus arises the Fetter of Reliance upon Rites and Ceremonies, Then is born in the mind of the man astray, the idea:

"But others may attain to enjoy this same delight I am bent upon, by seeking it even as I do. Wherefore should such enjoyment be theirs?" And distress at the thought that any should have enjoyment but himself comes to be the Fetter called Jealousy. Closely allied to this Fetter there also arises a gloating pride in his own present enjoyment, and annoyance at the spectacle of others in possession of a like pleasure, coupled with a wish that he might be able to take it from them and add it to his own, so to enhance his own sensation of delight. Thus arises the Fetter of Envy. Finally, in this particular exercise of Right Recollectedness which is observation of how the Ten Fetters come to arise, the Bhikkhu well perceives, clearly penetrates the fact that all these Fetters only arise because of the existence of the one, last, greatest Fetter of all, Ignorance, source and centre of all the evils that afflict man—ignorance of the veritable nature of things. For with that ignorance removed, and knowledge, true knowledge come in its place, this entire chain of fetters could never even begin to arise. This, in his Right Recollectedness, the Bhikkhu well knows and perceives.

Remains only to the practiser of Right Recollectedness to be recollected and mindful as regards the seven constituent elements of that condition of perfect enlightenment towards which he strives, these namely: This same Recollectedness which he is at the moment practising; Investigation as regards the Teaching of Enlightenment; Energy; Joyous Anticipation of the Bliss of Deliverance that lies before him; Quietude of mind and body; Concentration of mind; and perfect, unruffled Serenity as regards every possible contingency earthly or heavenly life of any kind can afford. Mindful of these seven ingredients of the State of Enlightenment, the Bhikkhu devotes himself assiduously to the work of producing them within himself and of bringing them to the full bloom of perfection.

Such is Right Recollectedness, complete in all its branches, as set forth by the Buddha Himself in His great discourse upon "The Foundations of Recollectedness". Summed up, it is recollectedness, complete awareness, ever-present consciousness, at each moment of time of the true state of affairs as regards the body and the states or sensations of the body, and the mind and the states of the mind. It has for its object the complete elimination of error in the contemplation of these four classes of things—above everything, the elimination of that most persistent, insistent error of all, the notion of "I". To give place in the mind to such notions as these: "This is *my* body; *I* am experiencing this sensation; *my* mind is thus; such and such a state of mind is *mine*!"—this is not Right, but Wrong Recollectedness, since it is the accentuating, the emphasising, and therefore the strengthening of that very idea of "I" which it is the express object of Right Recollectedness to weaken and finally destroy. Alike with the Path as a whole, this particular member of it is a method for the getting rid of this master error and of every other error that flows from it. It is a method of arriving at a true, close, exact knowledge of the nature of our own and every other existence. With the coming of that knowledge, it is no longer ill with us; it is lastingly, finally, utterly well. For all the ills that afflict, or ever can afflict, the son of earth are comprehended in one single word—Ignorance, Ignorance of Things as They Are.

CHAPTER VIII

RIGHT CONCENTRATION

THE third and final practice in the Mind-culture section of the Path, and the eighth and last member in order of mention, of the Path as a whole, is the practice of Right Concentration or —as it might equally well be called—Right Tranquillisation.

The state of mind aimed at in this practice is one not a little removed from the normal mental condition of the average person in everyday life. In their ordinary condition—regrettable to say—the minds of most people are only very occasionally in a state that can be called either concentrated or tranquillised. Too frequently they are in a condition that can only be described as scattered and agitated. To use the old Indian simile, the minds of the generality of mankind are like pots of water beneath which burns a fiercely flaming fire. Such pots are in a state of perpetual disturbance, boiling and bubbling up continually. And so is the mind beneath which burns the fierce fire of passions and desires; its surface never is tranquil, never is in a condition faithfully to reflect a clear image of anything. The concentrated, tranquillised mind, on the contrary, is like a pot of water from beneath which the fire has been removed. The smooth surface of the water in such a pot yields a faithful image of whatever is brought before it. So is the mind from beneath which has been withdrawn the fire of passion and desire. Its agitations and disturbances die down; and at length it is able to furnish something like a true representation of things as they are.

Like all comparisons for mental things drawn from things physical, this comparsion holds good only up to a certain point. It must not be driven too far and expected to fit, in every detail, the thing it is intended to image. For in the case of the "pot" of the mind, the derangement in its reflective powers is produced by the very images that are reflected on its surface *in their combination* with the "fire" of inclinations, desires, and passions that burns below it. If this "fire" is there burning, the fresh images that reach the mind through the various senses, add, as it were, fresh fuel to that fire, in the case of the mind that is unguarded, untrained, uncultured in the Buddhist sense of the word. The culture of the mind as a part of the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path, in that branch of its practice which is called Right Concentration, has for its object the bringing the mind to quiet by a double process of reducing the number of sense-impressions that reach it in the form of "representations," and therewith at the same time, reducing the strength, the fierceness of the desires and passions that burn beneath it.

Hence the first essential of the practice of Mind-culture in this regard, is the withdrawal of the practiser to some place where he can be free as much as possible from the too importunate intrusion of external sources of mental disturbance, from all violently distracting sights and sounds and so forth. The place chosen may be a solitary hut in the heart of a forest, or it may be a quiet room from which means have been taken to exclude all clamorous noises, in the heart of a great city. It matters little where the place is, so only it offers some approach to peace and quietude. In some such place, the aspirant to Right Concentration takes up a posture of body which he is able to maintain unchanged for some length of time without experiencing undue distress from so doing. It is not a matter of great importance what this posture is; only it is not advisable that it should be a reclining one, since such would tend to induce drowsiness and lassitude. In the East the usual posture taken in mental concentration is one in which the practiser sits cross-legged on a mat on the ground, since this is the position in which an Oriental is most comfortable and at ease. This posture, moreover, possesses the advantage, that should a cataleptic state supervene during the practice, the base of the body, as seated on the ground forming a triangle, is in a position of comparative stability and not so likely to fall over forward and do itself any hurt. For an Occidental, however, the best position in which to practise concentration of mind would be a sitting one, in a chair just high enough to allow the feet to rest comfortably on the floor, this being the position to which an Occidental is most accustomed, and therefore the one least likely to call his attention forcibly to the fact of the existence of the body through the arising of distress when the posture has been maintained for some length of time. Here the only requisite thing is that he should sit upright, not in a slouching or semi-reclining position, which, like a reclining posture, would favour inattention and drowsiness.

In some such place and posture, then, the Bhikkhu gives himself to the one-pointed observation with eye or mind—or with both, according as the case may be—of whatever object or idea has been given him by his teacher as subject for his contemplation, to the complete exclusion, so far as in him lies, of every other object or idea but the one chosen. Should any other idea or object attempt to force itself upon his attention, the Bhikkhu has to pull his mind off it and back to the chosen object again and again as often as the unwished object persists in presenting itself, in the same way that a calf tied to a post, is pulled back to it by the tether round its neck every time it seeks to stray away to some more attractive-looking piece of pasture than that immediately about the post to which it has been tied.

In the unusual effort thus entailed in concentrating the mind upon one object steadily for any length of time, many obstacles naturally are encountered by the beginner. Such a beginner, having hitherto in all probability let his mind ramble around and about any subject it was supposed to be considering, in the scattered, aimless way that characterises the bulk of ordinary thinking, finds it extremely difficult to bring to the task of concentrated thinking, the determined, continuous output of energy that task imperatively demands. Thinking, real thinking, is hard work—as exhausting at times as the severest manual labour, and the beginnner at first does not realise how all the energy at his command is required for its successful prosecution. He is inclined to hold back from putting forth all his strength.

To overcome this initial disinclination to strenuous endeavour, the Bhikkhu is advised, as a preliminary measure, to reflect upon the extreme desirability of the practice upon which he is about to enter, seeing that it is a certain means of bringing him that so precious and valuable acquisition to one who seeks deliverance —a calmed and collected mind. To overcome his backward tendency, he is advised to study carefully and long the great Teaching of which the practice of Right Concentration is a part, and so to convince himself of the immeasurable benefits he will derive from giving himself wholeheartedly and without reserve to that practice, that he will feel henceforth that no effort is too great, no toil too severe, which will bring him, were it only the least little inch, nearer to the goal to which that Teaching shows the way—the deliverance of the mind from Ignorance.

However, all minds are not alike. Some minds, in this work of concentrated effort, require to be spurred to do their best, while others have actually to be reined in, held back from making too great exertion; for on this path all extremes are equally to be avoided, and over-speed is as much a hindrance to the attainment of the goal as over-slowness. Of the travellers on the road to the city of Nibbāna who may enquire if they are likely to reach their destination before nightfall, some have to be told: "Yes, if you do not go too slow"; while others have to be told: "Yes, if you do not go too fast!" This over-eager, over-hasty condition of mind, as inimical to success in concentration as a lethargic state of mind, is largely bound up with a physical condition of the body, hyper-excitement of the nervous centres, and may be largely allayed by any physical means designed to bring about the soothing of such excitement that may be thought proper, of which may be mentioned, care in food eaten, measured and regular breathing, open-air exercise, resorting to the company of people of placid and equable temperament and avoiding the company of those of excitable and unquiet nature. Until through the use of these and any other means found suitable, the merely physical mechanism of thought is brought to a condition of normal equilibrium, it is almost useless to aim at the attainment of the concentration and tranquillisation of thought itself.

These two hindrances to concentration of mind, over-slowness and over-haste, beset the initial efforts in that practice. There is another hindrance that is encountered only at a later stage in that practice, but is not for that any less formidable. This is a state of dullness and listlessness as regards both practice and the results at which it aims. For no apparent reason it comes down upon the practiser of concentration like a sudden dark cloud shutting off from his sight the prospect that once allured, and causing him to feel as if all he has done and is doing in vain, and that he may as well give up the attempt. All zest or relish in his task goes from him, and he is left limp, inert, lifeless. To get rid of this sad and—while it lasts—very painful condition, the Bhikkhu is counselled to turn his attention to the full consideration of the result of failure to achieve the end he has set before himself. He is told to remind himself anew of the motives by which he first was prompted to embark upon this practice. He is again to call up before his mind the vision of the wretchedness to which he saw himself subject, from which wretchedness this practice offered him means of escape. He is to remember that then he discovered himself subject to the miseries of birth and birth again in a world, the perpetual prey of sickness, decay, and death. He is to remember that he has not yet won deliverance from these evils, that he is still at their mercy and ever will so remain, unless he continues his forward endeavours in the Way upon which he has entered, and conducts them to a successful issue. He is to remember that until he has done this, he cannot afford to slacken in his efforts, any more than a man, who finds himself in a burning house, can afford to pause for a single second in his endeavours to find some way of getting out of it.

The Bhikkhu overcome by this unhappy state of apathy may further arouse himself from it by dwelling in mind upon the greatness and grandeur of the Teacher who has shown the way to the deliverance he seeks. He is to think of the surpassing excellence of that Teaching as a means perfectly adapted to secure unfailingly the desired deliverance. And he is finally to let his mind dwell upon the thought of the great and noble Company of those who have followed that Teaching to its end in perfect deliverance from all ill, and to find inspiration for renewed effort, in the thought that these in persistent endeavour have found that the Way verily brings to the goal to which it promises to bring, and that what they have done he can do.

As the Bhikkhu in these ways urges on the steeds of the mind that would go too slow, holds in check those that would fain go too fast, and whips up those that make as though they would like to stop altogether, thus like a capable charioteer, who has his team under perfect command, conducting them steadily onward towards the goal, he is finally told that it will lighten his task considerably if he steadily shuns the company of those of scattered and unconcentrated mind, and frequents—so far as he frequents any company at all—only the company of those like-minded with himself, those also seeking the blessing of a mind that has come to concentration and calm.

The particular object upon which it is most suitable to concentrate the mind in the practice of Right Concentration is not the same for every person. Each individual is different in some way from every other, so that the object of contemplation best for one person might be very far from best, might even be detrimental, to another.

The object, through the contemplation whereof one individual might obtain calmness and concentration of mind with but little undue strain, might impose quite a considerable amount of strain if taken as point of departure in his efforts at concentration, by another person. To one man, for reasons based on his general temperament and constitution, a certain object of concentration might prove so naturally attractive that he might experience no difficulty whatever in holding his attention to it, and hence be saved so much needless expenditure of energy in his initial efforts; while another for similar reasons might find the same object naturally repugnant to him and difficult to keep before the mind, and so be obliged to expend a considerable amount of energy merely in overcoming this natural repugnance before beginning upon the actual work of concentrating the mind upon the object in question. But the practice of concentration is quite difficult enough without adding to it the difficulties entailed by an unsuitable choice of its object. To avoid unnecessary waste of energy it is important that the object of concentration chosen, from the very beginning of the practice, should be one suited in every way to the particular individual entering on the practice, and this desirable end can only be secured by having as one's guide in the matter a person thoroughly competent to indicate the precise object upon which one can practice his concentration with the best prospect of speedy and happy results. To avoid all needless expenditure of energy a teacher or guru is required, who by experience and personal knowledge is able to prescribe just the proper object of contemplation for his pupil, the latter being expected to do as his teacher prescribes and not wander off on tracks of his own. Of course, there is no compulsion in this regard. If the pupil finds that he is not making the progress he had expected under the guidance of the teacher he has taken for his guide, or even if he only thinks he is not making satisfactory progress—which is not quite the same thing!—he is at perfect liberty to leave that teacher or guru—first asking his permission, however—and to go and take for his guide another teacher who he may consider will prove of more benefit to him in the instruction he gives.

In the East, none would dream of taking up seriously the practice of mental concentration without putting himself under the guidance of one in whom he had perfect confidence, one whom he felt he could trust utterly to steer him safely through all the errors and pitfalls, and even dangers, that would beset an ill-directed and haphazard practice of concentration. For there are very real dangers in mental concentration of this specific kind, if attempted without competent guidance. Sometimes it is danger of a breakdown in physical health; in other cases it is danger of a lapse from mental health which quite possibly might result in an attack of dementia more or less acute and of a duration more or less prolonged, according to the seriousness of the disturbance of mental balance. An unwisely chosen object of concentration, far from leading to a calm and concentrated state of mind, may very easily lead to distraction and excitement of the most violent kind, culminating in a state of temporary insanity that might readily pass into a condition of permanent mental alienation if not checked in time by a wise teacher's guidance and help.

The care which thus has to be exercised in choosing a subject for meditation in respect of its suitability to the individual's particular temperament and dispositions of mind, applies only in the earlier stages of the practice. Later on, when concentration is approaching perfection, almost any kind of peg will do on which to hang the cloak of concentration. The well-practised person could find quite as profitable an object of concentration in a common matchbox as in anything else. In one of the schools for the teaching of concentration belonging to the Zen Jhāna sect of Japan, the method followed is for each pupil to retire to his cell and there concentrate his mind upon any, even the most trivial object, and at the end of a certain time come to the teacher and tell him just what thoughts have arisen in his mind in connection with the object contemplated, whereupon the teacher utters the single word "right!" or "wrong!" If the former, then the task in meditation is finished for the day; if the latter, the pupil has to return to his cell and renew his meditation, and keep on doing so until the teacher is satisfied with the result he achieves. However, it is only the expert in meditation who may take any object of meditation he pleases. The beginner will find it best and safest to follow strictly the advice of a competent adviser, and take as the object of his contemplation only what the latter gives him. That way lies surety and safety. Any other way lies possible, nay, probable mental derangement—temporary at the very least, and quite possibly permanent.

The fact that, to be safe and effective, Right Concentration has to be practised by each individual in a way peculiarly adapted to his own mental or psychical constitution, makes it impossible to set forth in writing any instruction that in its details will hold good generally for all who read; and as a matter of fact, only one such book dealing with meditative practices is found in Buddhist literature, and it is of doubtful value. But if thus nothing detailed of real worth can be said about particular methods whereby any and every individual may attain to Right or Perfect Concentration, we do find in the Buddhist Scriptures a brief description in barest outline of eight several stages or states through which the practiser of Right Concentration by Buddhist methods passes on his way to a final stage which is the threshold of cessation from all conditioned existence. These several stages of deeper and deeper concentration and tranquillisation of mind, of greater and greater freedom from the perturbations due to sense-impressions, memories and thoughts connected with sense-impressions, and finally, to memories and thoughts about these memories and thoughts, are called by the technical term Jhānas.

The first of these stages in the Buddhist practice of Right Concentration is described as a state of mind from which for the time being is banished all desire for the pleasurable and delightful, all craving for anything unwholesome, anything making for bondage to the things of sense. In this state, however, there is retained the faculty of taking up a subject of reflection and of dwelling upon it, turning it over and considering it at length; in a word, the ordinary processes of intellection remain active, their working being accompanied by a feeling of pleasure at this temporary release from the thraldom of attachment to objects of sense-delight.

In the second Jhāna, the normal processes of thinking are left behind. There is no more taking up of a subject of thought and reflecting upon it. The mind exists in a state of simple existence, in the enjoyment of utter peace and tranquillity like that of a quiet lake whose smooth, glassy surface remains free from the disturbance of any reflected object. This state of concentration and tranquillisation is accompanied by a feeling of joy and bliss that is the outcome of this same concentration and tranquillity.

In the third Jhāna, the last shred of delight in the pleasures of sense, even of the most rarified, sublimated description, is transcended, and there is experienced a tranquil, all-satisfying happiness, unshadowed by the least disturbance due to any anticipation of happiness to come. This last, technically called "Pīti," entirely disappears, and there supervenes a state of clear, unruffled, perfectly conscious bliss—the bliss of being done with all "that unrest which men miscall delight".

In the fourth Jhāna, the very idea of such opposites as pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, is transcended, left behind, all memory of any such things experienced in the past is clean wiped out, and a state of calm, clear, perfect collectedness of mind is experienced into which there enters no least trace of feeling of pleasure or of un-pleasure—a state of equanimity, utter and complete.

The remaining four Jhānas or states of concentration which make up the eight, possess in common a subtler, more sublimated charactor than the four just mentioned.

In the first of this set of specially refined states of consciousness, all idea of the existence of objects in a state of separation is lost, all discrimination between a *this* and a *that* is done away; and there remains only a consciousness of an infinitude of space.

In the next more refined state, the idea of infinite space is transcended, and its place taken by the idea of an infinitude of consciousness.

In the next higher state, the idea of anything at all, of any kind of infinitude, whether of space or of consciousness, falls away, and the only idea present is that of nothingness.

And in the last of these four higher, more sublimated Jhānas, all idea whatsoever ceases, whether of something or nothing. There is here neither perceiving nor yet not-perceiving of aught; all predication or possibility of predication has come to utter end.

These several stages of Right Concentration are passed through one after another in the order here given, beginning with the first, somewhat after the fashion of ascending a stairway. Upon attainment of the last, the practiser may pass still further into a final state that may be called the ante-room to final severance from all that we call life, life in any world. Or if he so chooses—the decision to do so having to be made before he enters upon the first Jhāna at the beginning of his practice—he may again descend, step by step, the "stairway" by which he has but now come, he may pass in reverse order from one to another of the states of consciousness he has just experienced, and so find himself once more in a state of normal consciousness.

Descriptions such as these, of states of mind only to be attained by those who deliberately set themselves to the work of their attaining, cannot be anything but unsatisfactory to those who have no actual, personal knowledge of them so brief and so slight are they; and to those who do possess such knowledge, they can give no satisfaction at all, since they no more than adumbrate in faint, remote fashion what to them is an intense, palpitating actuality. But indeed, from the standpoint of practical Buddhism which has for its aim the final deliverance of the son of earth from all Ill, although the practice of Right Concentration is set forth as an element in Buddhist mental culture, its practice is really not of the first importance; it is no absolutely necessary and indispensable part of the method of progress towards that deliverance. This latter may be, and, in fact, is reached quite apart from any attainment in the supernormal functioning of consciousness. Nay, though it need not necessarily do so, the practice of Right Concentration in the case of some, might quite possibly prove an actual hindrance to progress towards the goal, if the practiser were to abandon himself to feelings of simple delight in the temporary satisfaction it secured him, and indulged in it purely for the sake of that delight and satisfaction.

On the other hand, the practice of Right Concentration is not wholly valueless to the traveller towards deliverance. One, for instance, who in his strivings after deliverance from all Ill, finds himself hindered and tormented by hankerings after sense-delights, may be and is much benefited—or at least, the opportunity is offered him of gaining much benefit—by the practice of the first Jhāna, in which state he obtains at least temporary relief from the fret and fever of his more troublesome and grosser cravings. Upon his return to normal consciousness, the memory of the comfort experienced in passing respite obtained from the torment of these cravings may be strong enough to overcome all sense of any delight to be derived from indulgence in their satisfaction, and so the Bhikkhu may be moved to make greater efforts than he hitherto has made, to be rid of what he now perceives to be a very inferior form of enjoyment. That further torment of the man who is seeking to arrive at perfect understanding, a restless and wandering mind, is also for the time being allayed in the practice of the Jhānas, and the experience of the bliss of this relief constitutes an incentive to the man to put forth all his strength in the endeavour to be rid of his restlessness, and to make the quieted and calmed condition of mind of which he has had a taste, a permanent, abiding possession.

But even for the normal-living man, the man of the world of everyday life, the occasional practice of Jhāna might be productive of not a little benefit. For the practice of Right Recollectedness in this specific form, is after all, only an extension or amplification, a more intensely cultivated form, of a faculty, the presence of which in some degree is an absolute necessity in any mental functioning that is to be at all effective. It is not in any sense to be looked upon as an aberration or dislocation of the normal consciousness.

All consciousness worthy the name, is consciousness of some one thing to the exclusion for the time being, of all things else; such act of exclusion is of the very essence of consciousness. In Right Concentration, this essential feature in the act of becoming aware of anything, is merely carried to a higher, intenser power than is done in normal operations. The exclusion of all unnecessary elements is an essential part of even the most trifling functions of ordinary life, if they are not to run risk of dispersion and futility. The simple act of becoming aware of objects through the senses is an act of exclusion. The senses, in Buddhist psychology, are called "doors," but they are doors not so much for the admission of the right visitors as for the *exclusion* of all but these—for the exclusion of every class of vibration but the particular ones required to make the impression corresponding to the sense in question.

The eye, for example, is an organ not specifically for the *admission* of light-vibrations, but for the *shutting out* of all but that particular class of vibration. In this universe of pulsations of a multiplicity and variety beyond all calculation, ceaselessly hurtling about in every direction, the eye is an instrument specially adapted to shut out all of them save those fitted to produce the sensation called sight. The ear, correspondingly, is an organ for excluding all the multitudinous vibrations everywhere at play, saving only those appropriate to the production of the sensation we call hearing. And so on, through all the other senses. Each is a "door" for the exclusion, rather than the admission, of vibrations. Right Concentration, then, according to Buddhist ideas, is simply the exercise of this excluding faculty in supreme degree, with reference to the finest, subtlest sense man possesses, the organ whereby he senses ideas—the mind—in the shutting out, for the time being, of every idea but the particular one which it has been deliberately decided is to be allowed to enter.

It is some such process of exclusion as this—albeit unconscious, not deliberate—which finds place in the operations of what we are accustomed to call "genius". When some unknown Greek sculptor—for he must have been a Greek—succeeds in expressing in marble the infinite sweetness, the endlessly patient compassionateness, the deep, wise serenity that speak from the eyes, the lips, the brow of the Gāndhāra fragment that depicts the Buddha, it is because—without perhaps consciously knowing it—he so concentrated his whole mind upon the idea and the ideal he wished to portray, that his hand could do no other than produce the lineaments which all who know aught of the Teacher it aims to represent cannot but marvel at and admire.

When a Copernicus, gazing at the heavens, lights in a flash on the law that breaks away from all that has hitherto been taught on the subject, and yet accounts for all the motions of the shining worlds to a point of perfection never before attained, it is because by sheer force of his intense desire to know, he has fixed his mind upon the problem he wishes to solve with a concentrated force that excludes from his mind, for the time being, all thought about anything else whatsoever.

Or when a Newton, looking at a fallen apple, suddenly divines that explanation of its movement which all the millions of the human race who have seen apples and other things fall to the ground all their lives, have never even dreamt of, we have another example of the intense, exclusive application of mental force which—as it would almost seem, by magic—pierces to the inmost heart of a phenomenon, of which ordinary observation and intellection seem merely to touch the surface and nothing more.

With all this, however, Right Concentration, as an exercise in the practice of Buddhist mental-culture, cannot be placed on the same level as that member of the Noble Eightfold Path which immediately precedes it in order of mention; in point of importance it cannot be ranked the equal of Right Recollectedness. For albeit in its unconscious practice, it leads to the production of what the world most values and admires, the works of its geniuses; and in its conscious, deliberate exercise, provides temporary relief from the pressure of disturbing passions and desires to him who seeks such relief; it can be dispensed with as a stage towards the Buddhist goal of deliverance from all Ill. It is no necessary, indispensable step on the road to that deliverance. It is something rather in the nature of a halt by the way, a sort of wayside rest-house where the spent wayfarer, for a space, may ease his weary frame; which the traveller stout of wind and limb, however, can quite well afford to pass by unheeding, the while he continues his journey.

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